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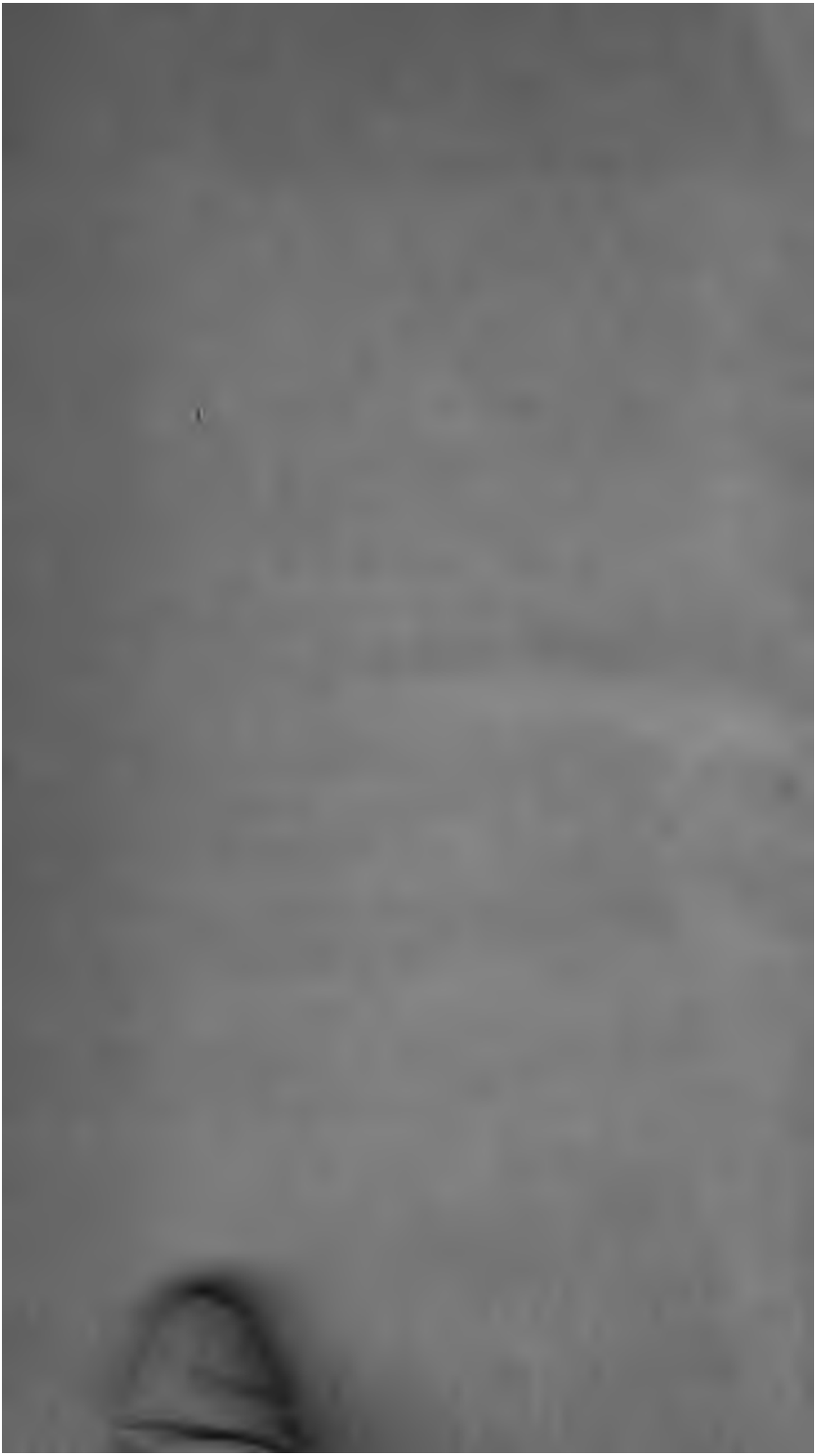

(Portens)

THE

WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND

BEILBY PORTEUS, D.D.

VOL. I.—LIFE.

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RIGHT REVEREND

BEILBY PORTEUS, D.D.

LATE BISHOP OF LONDON:

WITH

HIS LIFE,

BY THE

REV. ROBERT HODGSON, A.M. F.R.S.

RECTOR OF ST. GEORGE'S HANOVER-SQUARE,
AND ONE OF THE CHAPLAINS IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY

A NEW EDITION, IN SIX VOLUMES.

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1823.

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TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

SHUTE,

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM,

AND

THE RIGHT REVEREND

GEORGE,

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

THE FOLLOWING

LIFE OF DR. BEILBY PORTEUS,

LATE BISHOP OF LONDON,

FOR WHOM,

AS A PRELATE,

THEY ENTERTAINED THE HIGHEST RESPECT,

AND,

AS A FRIEND,

THE MOST AFFECTIONATE REGARD,

IS,

WITH GREAT DEFERENCE,

INSCRIBED,

BY

THEIR OBLIGED

AND MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

ROBERT HODGSON.

15 Grosvenor-street,
May 1811.

THE LIFE OF

DR. BEILBY PORTEUS,

BISHOP OF LONDON.

UPON the merits of the venerable Prelate, of whose Writings a new and complete edition is now presented to the world, the public sentiment has long and justly decided: and it is under the impression, that whatever relates to him will be read with interest, that a History of his Life is here prefixed. I could much have wished that the task of preparing it had fallen into abler hands: but thus far I feel justified in saying, that it has been drawn from the most authentic

sources, and certainly with no intention to raise his character by undue panegyric. The portrait of such a man is best delineated in the simple colouring of truth; and it has been my anxious endeavour so to represent it in the following pages.

Dr. Beilby Porteus, late Bishop of London, was the youngest but one of nineteen children, and was born at York on the 8th of May 1731. His father and mother were natives of Virginia, in North America. They were both descended from good families, and during their residence in that colony, were on a footing with its principal inhabitants, to many of whom they were allied. His father was of no profession; but, being born to what in that country was considered as an independent fortune, lived upon his own estate. It consisted chiefly of plantations of tobacco; and on one

of

of these, called Newbottle (from a village of that name near Edinburgh, once belonging to his family, but now in the possession of the Marquis of Lothian), he usually resided. The house stood upon a rising ground, with a gradual descent to York river, which was there at least two miles over: and here he enjoyed within himself every comfort and convenience that a man of moderate wishes could desire; living without the burthen of taxes, and possessing, under the powerful protection of this kingdom, peace, plenty, and security. The Bishop had a singular picture, which, though not in the best style of colouring, was yet thought valuable by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as a specimen of the extent which the art of painting had reached at that time in America: and he himself very highly prized it, as exhibiting a faithful and

interesting representation of his father's residence.

His mother's name was Jennings. She was said to be distantly related to Sarah Jennings, the wife of John, Duke of Marlborough: and two of her ancestors, Sir Edmund and Sir Jonathan Jennings, lived at Ripon in Yorkshire, for which place, it appears, they were both representatives in Parliament in the reign of James the Second. Her father, Colonel Jennings, was Sir Edmund's son, and the first of the family who settled in Virginia, where he was Superintendent of Indian affairs for that province; became afterwards one of the Supreme Council; and for some time acted as Deputy Governor of the Colony.

The principal reason which induced the Bishop's father to quit a situation so perfectly independent and comfortable,

as

as that he had in America, was the desire of procuring for his children better instruction than he could there obtain. His health besides had been much impaired by the climate; and these causes combined, determined him at length to leave the country, and remove to England, which he accordingly did in 1720, and fixed himself in the city of York.

In one respect, however, and that an important one, this change in his situation was attended with considerable inconvenience; for, whilst his expenses every year increased, his revenue diminished almost in the same proportion; and either by the negligence or dishonesty of his agents, he received little more than a fourth part of what ought to have been his real income. But still, even with such contracted means, he accomplished the object nearest to his heart, that of

giving his children an excellent education; and certainly, in the instance at least of the subject of these memoirs, his kindness was repaid beyond his most sanguine expectations.

After having been for several years at a small school at York, Mr. Porteus, then at the age of thirteen, was placed at Ripon, under the care of Mr. Hyde, an upright, sensible, judicious man, of whose attention he ever entertained a grateful remembrance; and from him, at an earlier age than is now usually the case, he was sent to Cambridge, where, by the recommendation and under the immediate superintendence of his elder brother, Mr. Robert Porteus*, he was admitted a sizer

* This excellent man had the living of Cockayne Hatley, near Potton, in Bedfordshire; and I cannot mention his name, without offering in this place a tribute of affectionate respect to his memory. With very

a sizer at Christ's College, of which Dr. Rooke was at that time master, and the only person whom he then knew in the University.

His attention, whilst he continued under-graduate, was directed chiefly to mathematical studies; and in these he gave the best proof of industry and ability, by the situation he obtained of tenth wrangler amongst the honorary degrees of his year. After having taken his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1752, he became a candidate for one of the gold medals, instituted not long before by His

very considerable literary attainments, he combined the greatest gentleness and simplicity of manners. Exemplary in all his domestic duties, he was beloved by his family: indefatigable in the labours of his sacred office, he was revered by his parish.—No one ever more uniformly maintained the Christian character; and by those who knew his many virtues he was most sincerely regretted.—He died in the prime of life, and is buried in Hatley church.

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occurrences, he had been placed in a situation which of all others he most coveted; he had leisure to prosecute at his own discretion those pursuits which were best suited to his taste and disposition; and during the intervals of study, he was passing his time in the society of friends whom he respected and loved.

The happiness however which he thus experienced, was not long without alloy; for about this time he was called suddenly into Yorkshire by the death of his mother; an event which filled him with the deepest grief, and, together with a severe cold which he caught in travelling, brought on a most serious illness, the effects of which he felt occasionally during his whole life.

On his return to college, he found that without his knowledge, his friends had been soliciting for him the situation of

Esquire

Esquire Beadle, which had become vacant by the promotion of Mr. Burroughs, afterwards Sir James Burroughs, to the Headship of Caius College. It was an office but ill suited with his turn of mind, and he was at first disinclined to accept it; but in consequence of the kind exertions which had been made in his favour, and, above all, his anxiety to relieve his father from any further expense, he at last complied. He kept it however little more than two years, having determined to make up the deficiency in his income in a way more agreeable to himself, by taking private pupils. These, with his established character and acknowledged talents, were easily obtained: and, amongst others, was the late Lord Grantham, afterwards Ambassador to Spain, and, for a short time, as his father had been before him,

Secretary

Secretary of State. He was a man of the most amiable disposition, of unblemished integrity, and a highly cultivated understanding; and his death, which happened prematurely in 1785, was generally and deeply lamented; by none however more sincerely than by his early friend and tutor, who had conceived the highest opinion of his abilities, and had lived with him for nearly thirty years on terms of mutual intimacy, confidence, and regard.

Mr. Porteus had been long destined for the Church, as well by his own deliberate choice, as the wishes of his family; and accordingly, at the age of twenty-six, he took orders, being ordained deacon at Buckden in the year 1757, by Dr. Thomas then Bishop of Lincoln, and not long after, priest by Archbishop Hutton at York, where he

preached

preached the ordination sermon. On his return to the University he resumed the charge of his pupils; but, amidst the cares of tuition, he found time for other pursuits, and more particularly for the exercise of his poetical talents, which were certainly of no ordinary stamp. Of this indeed he soon after gave a public proof, by obtaining Mr. Seaton's prize for the best English poem on a sacred subject. The subject fixed upon was "Death;" and it was one, perhaps, at that time better suited than any other to his feelings, in consequence of his father's death, which had occurred a little before. The loss of so kind a parent, whom he most sincerely loved, had very deeply afflicted him; and he was therefore well prepared to describe in the language of the heart the sad and solemn scenes of human mortality. How admirably he has done

it,

it, those who know and can feel the poem, are best able to judge. It has been long in print, and, I believe, has been uniformly considered as a very able composition. Undoubtedly, as a juvenile performance, there are few superior; for it displays a correctness of taste combined with a sublimity of thought, and a power and justness of expression, which have seldom been exhibited in the first effusions of poetry.

In the mean time he was not inattentive to the duties of his profession, nor unmindful of the engagement into which he had entered, "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word." A profane and very licentious pamphlet, entitled, "The History of the Man after God's own Heart," was about that time much in circulation, and had made a dangerous

impression

summer he quitted college, where he had lived most happily for the last fourteen years, to reside at Lambeth. Here he had ample leisure for his professional studies; and it was besides a singular advantage, which he did not fail to improve, to have constantly before him such a guide as the Archbishop; a man whom he well describes "as endowed with superior talents, which he had highly cultivated; of a strong and sound understanding; of extensive and profound erudition, more particularly in Hebrew literature, and every branch of theology; an admired and useful preacher; of unblemished purity of manners, unaffected piety, unbounded benevolence, and exemplary in the discharge of all his various functions, as a parochial clergyman, a bishop, and a metropolitan." "He was to me," he adds, "a most kind friend and

a bountiful

a bountiful benefactor: but far beyond all the other benefits I derived, was that invaluable one of enjoying his conversation, of being honoured with his direction and advice, and of living under the influence of his example. These were advantages indeed; and, although I did not profit by them so much as I ought, yet to them, under Providence, I ascribe whatever little credit I have attained in the world, and the high situation I have since arrived at in the Church*."

On the 13th of May 1765, Mr. Porteus married Margaret, eldest daughter of Brian Hodgson, Esq. of Ashbourne in Derbyshire; and in the course of the same year he was presented by the Archbishop to the

* This and other passages in the Bishop's own words, which the reader will find introduced into his life, are extracted chiefly from several manuscript volumes in my possession, and in his own handwriting, containing a great variety of facts, and observations on the principal incidents of his life.

the two small livings of Rucking and Wittersham in Kent, which, however, he soon resigned for the rectory of Hunton, in the same county, in addition to a prebend at Peterborough, which had been given him by His Grace before. Upon the death of Dr. Denne, in 1767, he obtained the rectory of Lambeth; and soon after this he took his degree of Doctor in Divinity, on which occasion he preached the Commencement sermon. In this discourse, which is now the eighth of his first volume, "I ventured," he says, "to recommend it to the University to pay a little more attention to the instruction of their youth, especially those designed for orders, in the principles of revealed religion. I proposed that these should have a place assigned to them among the other initiatory studies of the place; that they should have the same

encouragement

encouragement given to them as all the other sciences; that they should be made an indispensable branch of academical education, and have their full share of academical honours and rewards. This produced no practical effect at the time; but some years afterwards, Mr. Norris, a gentleman of fortune in Norfolk, into whose hands some extracts from this discourse happened to fall, was induced by them to found and endow a professorship at Cambridge, for the sole purpose of giving lectures to the students there in the doctrines of revealed religion, and afterwards to bequeath by his will a premium of twelve pounds per ann. to the author of the best prose essay on a sacred subject; the larger part of that sum to be expended on a gold medal, and the remainder in books."

These, as may be well imagined, were

most gratifying circumstances to Dr. Porteus, and far exceeded his expectation. At the same time, the object which he had in view was in itself so reasonable, so evidently necessary in all Christian education, and he had enforced it in a manner so powerful and convincing, that one cannot wonder it should make on serious minds a very deep impression, and be followed by some endeavour, either on the part of the University, or of some pious individual, to carry it into execution. The result unquestionably has been a most beneficial one; for it has not only produced some excellent prize dissertations on various important subjects, and made theology an essential part of academical instruction, but has been the means of giving to the world one of the ablest and most compendious systems of divinity, of which it is at present in possession,

session, namely, the Lectures delivered by the first Norrisian Professor, Dr. Hey. The reader will no doubt be struck with a great originality, and sometimes eccentricity of illustration; but, as a work of reference, full of deep research, and accurate and extensive information, more particularly with respect to the history and doctrines of the Church of England, it cannot be too strongly recommended to the biblical student.

On the 3d of August 1768, after a most harassing and painful illness, which he bore with the greatest fortitude, and the most profound acquiescence in the divine will, Archbishop Secker died at Lambeth; leaving his two chaplains, Dr. Stinton* and Dr. Porteus, joint executors, and

* Of this learned, amiable and excellent man, the Bishop has left the following short, but interesting account:—" The death of Dr. George Stinton, which occurred April the 30th, 1783, was a very severe and unexpected

and, amongst other directions of his will, committing to their care the revisal and publication of his Lectures on the Catechism, his manuscript sermons, and other occasional

unexpected misfortune to me. He was one of my best and dearest and most intimate friends. I had known him, and lived with him in habits of the most perfect intimacy, for near twenty years; during which time not the slightest difference ever arose between us. He was a man of great integrity and worth, of superior abilities, and very extensive erudition. Of the learned languages he was a complete master, and was also well skilled in French, German, and Italian. He wrote but little, and published only four sermons, all on public occasions, and all excellent. He possessed the talent of conversation in a degree superior to almost any man I ever knew, and spoke, as he composed, with remarkable elegance and correctness. To this he added a large share of wit and humour, all which rendered him a most agreeable and entertaining companion.

"He was in appearance, a strong, robust man, and seemed calculated, as much as any one I ever saw, for long life. But he was cut off very suddenly and unexpectedly, and added one more to the number of those striking instances of the uncertainty of human life, which are every day occurring, and which ought to make a stronger impression upon us than they usually

occasional writings. This trust was faithfully fulfilled: and in order to render the work more complete, as well as to pay the last tribute in his power to his deceased friend and benefactor, Dr. Porteus prefixed a "Review of the Archbishop's Life and Character." It is unquestionably a masterly performance, and one of the happiest specimens of biographical composition. The character of the Archbishop is drawn with accuracy and discrimination. There are no false tints thrown in to embellish and set off the picture. It is touched with the firm hand and in the sober colouring of truth; and the impression left on the mind is a mingled sentiment of admiration and esteem

usually do. He was buried in the church of All-hallows Barking, of which he was Vicar. I attended his funeral, and shed tears of sincere grief over his grave."

esteem for the talents, the erudition, the unostentatious beneficence, and the profound Christian piety, of that illustrious Prelate.

It was not however merely by giving to the world this "review of his life," that Dr. Porteus testified his respect and affection for the memory of his great Friend. He neglected afterwards no opportunity of defending him privately or publicly. He suffered no calumny to go abroad, no unjust insinuation to be thrown out against him, without instantly stepping forward to refute and to repel it. His anxiety in this particular was unremitting and incessant. As an instance of it, I can never forget the surprise and pain and indignation, which were excited in his mind, upon reading two passages in the late Lord Orford's works, in one of which the point of an Epigram is made

made to turn upon the supposition that the Archbishop was a hypocrite; and in the other, he is expressly charged, in direct unqualified terms, with having been the President of an Atheistical Club! Such assertions as these, so disgraceful in themselves, and so utterly and grossly false, the Bishop of London, as he then was, could not suffer for a moment to pass uncontradicted. He wrote immediately to the Editor, Mr. Berry, stating in the strongest terms the injustice and mischief of such flagrant misrepresentations, and offering, if the thing were possible, to have the leaves, which contained them, cancelled at his own expense. Unfortunately, the book had got too much into circulation to render this proposal feasible: but he so far succeeded, as to obtain a direct promise from Mr. Berry, that, should the work in question

ever

ever reach a second edition, the obnoxious passages should be expunged.

The same solicitude was also very strongly marked in another instance, upon his perusing the Life of Bishop Warburton, by Bishop Hurd. His own words, which follow, show how quick and alive his feelings were upon this subject, at the same time that they had nothing in them of bitterness and animosity.

"In this work," he says, "I found the merit of Archbishop Secker greatly underrated, as a writer, a scholar, a divine, and a critic in Hebrew. I therefore thought myself called upon, by honour and by gratitude, to vindicate my old master against these unjust and injurious attempts to lower his character; which I did by publishing, in a separate form, a new edition of the life prefixed to his works, adding at the same time a preface,

and

and a few notes tending to confute Bishop Hurd's misrepresentations of him and his writings. Still, however, this act of justice to my great Patron, never in the least diminished the high respect and veneration which I always entertained for the character of Bishop Hurd; whose piety, learning, taste, and genius, rendered him the great ornament of literature and religion, and very justly gained him not only the esteem, but the affection, friendship, and confidence of his Sovereign, and raised him to that distinguished situation, which he filled with so much dignity both in public life, and in an honourable retirement for so long a course of years."

After Archbishop Secker's death, Dr. Porteus devoted his entire attention to the care of his two benefices, Hunton and Lambeth. Till his parsonage at the former place was ready for his reception, he

he resided at a small neat cottage in the village of Linton, which was near enough to enable him to perform with ease his parochial duties, superintend the repairs, and make such alterations as the great capability of the situation suggested to his mind. He had found the premises at first in a very ruinous and neglected state, no rector having lived there for above thirty years: but he saw at one glance the natural beauties of the place, and that it required only a little skill and taste to display them to advantage. This was gradually, and at some expense, completely effected. A new room was afterwards added to the house; and, by ornamenting the grounds about it, and letting in the rich luxuriant prospect which it commanded on every side, he made it at last a most comfortable and delightful residence. Every thing indeed concurred

concurred to attach him strongly to Hunton. "It was to me," he says, with all that animation, which was so peculiar to him, "a little terrestrial Paradise: for though there are many parsonages larger, handsomer, and more commodious, yet in comfort, warmth, repose, tranquillity, and cheerfulness, in variety of walks, shelter, shade, and sunshine, in perfectly rural and picturesque scenery, I know few superior to it. What however is of more importance, no place was ever better calculated to excite and cherish devout and pious sentiments towards the great Creator and Preserver of the Universe. The solemn silence of the thicket and the grove, the extensive horizon that opened to the view, the glories of the rising and the setting sun, the splendour of a moon-light night and a starry sky,

all

all which presented themselves to the eye, to a vast extent without interruption, from the lawn before the house; these, and a variety of other sublime and pleasing objects, could not fail to soothe and tranquillize and elevate the soul, and raise it up to high and heavenly contemplations. But it was not the charms of the country only which formed the delight of Hunton. The neighbourhood was excellent, consisting principally of antient and long-established families, who lived on their own estates in that decent hospitality, and that judicious mixture of society and retirement, which constitute the true felicity of human life, and which so remarkably and so fortunately distinguish the gentry and nobility of England from almost all other countries in Europe. The greater part of them

too were not only polished in their manners, but of exemplary piety, probity, and benevolence."

Much however as he enjoyed such a retreat and such friends as these, it never withdrew his thoughts from more serious and more important pursuits. He discharged with zeal the duties of his parish; preached almost always in the morning; in the afternoon very frequently lectured on the catechism; and lost no opportunity, when he saw fit occasion, of private admonition. In his attention to the poor he was uniform and indefatigable; he visited the sick, comforted the afflicted, relieved the indigent: he entered, in short, with assiduity and earnestness into whatever could promote in any degree their temporal and eternal welfare, and he did not labour in vain. "I had the happiness," he says, "to see my church

well

well filled with a congregation, neat and decent in their attire, with cheerful and satisfied looks, serious in their devotions, and attentive and grateful to their instructor."

In the winter months he resided at Lambeth, where, not less than in the country, he supported the high character of a faithful, laborious, conscientious parish priest. Unfortunately, there was here no parsonage in which the rector could reside: but as there was a piece of ground of about two acres, belonging to the glebe, in an extremely good situation, and at a convenient distance from the church, he thought that by obtaining an act of parliament for that purpose, a part of this might be sold; and with the sum which that produced, a fit and commodious residence might be built upon the remainder. Accordingly, an agree-

ment

ment upon this principle was made with a builder at a stipulated price, and a ground plan and elevation of the intended house were drawn under his own direction. He was not however incumbent long enough to carry himself this design into execution; but he had made such excellent arrangements, that his successor, Dr. Vyse, had no difficulty in accomplishing it; and the present parsonage, than which there are few better, was, with little variation, built upon the original plan proposed by Dr. Porteus.

Besides the active part which he thus took in regard to the rectorial house, he found that the affairs of the parish had fallen, from some neglect or mismanagement, into great confusion, in consequence of debts inadvertently contracted by the overseers. This was not a credit-

able circumstance; and, in conjunction therefore with the parish officers, and the principal gentlemen then resident in Lambeth, he took great pains to reduce them into order. With this view, the sum of eighteen hundred pounds was borrowed upon annuities, with which they not only cleared off old encumbrances, but had a considerable surplus left, which was very judiciously expended in repairing and embellishing the church, and in other essential improvements. There was nothing indeed that tended in any degree to the credit and benefit of the parish which escaped his attention; but that especially which occupied his thoughts, and to which his chief anxiety was earnestly directed, was the salvation of those committed to his care. This was his great, his never-ceasing object; and there cannot be a stronger instance of it, than

than the Letter which he addressed to them, on the more religious observance of Good Friday. In this excellent little tract, which has long been in the catalogue of "The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," after lamenting the neglect, which then universally prevailed, of that sacred day, he took occasion to state the various benefits which it was intended to commemorate; the importance of them to the welfare of mankind; the unbounded compassion in which they originated; and the unparalleled sufferings by which they were acomplished: and from hence he inferred the indispensable obligation under which a Christian lies, from every motive of interest, of duty, and of gratitude, to observe with peculiar strictness and devotion the anniversary of the Crucifixion; a day, which recalls forcibly to the mind

the stupendous doctrine of atonement; for which our Church has wisely provided a most solemn service, and which is calculated more than any other to lay us low before the Throne of God in penitential humiliation, and to fill the soul with thankfulness and love. All these points he touched upon in so strong, so impressive, and so affectionate a manner, as could not fail to have the happiest effect. It was indeed even greater than he had reason to expect; for, not only was a more devout observance of Good Friday produced in his own parish, but, as he has himself observed, "on the very next return of that day, the shops were all shut up, the churches were crowded, and the utmost seriousness and decorum took place, throughout the cities of London and Westminster, and their environs."

In

In the year 1769, he had the honour of being appointed chaplain to His Majesty, and soon after he obtained the mastership of the Hospital of St. Cross, near Winchester. This piece of preferment had been selected by Archbishop Secker, as one of his options, and the presentation to it, when it became vacant, was left to the discretion of certain trustees, to whom he gave authority for that purpose. The two persons, who were considered, on mature deliberation, as having the strongest claims, were his Grace's chaplains at the time of his decease; and it was determined that Dr. Porteus should have the mastership, and that he should resign his prebend of Peterborough to Dr. Stinton. In consequence of this arrangement, he for some years afterwards resided occasionally at St. Cross. The place had

nothing very striking to recommend it, especially after the beautiful scenery which he had in such perfection at Hunton: but there was yet a stillness about it which pleased him. The neighbourhood afforded excellent society, and he had the satisfaction of improving, in some degree, the condition of the poor brethren in the hospital, by adding a small increase of salary to each.

About this time a circumstance occurred, which then excited considerable interest, and in which the part that Dr. Porteus took has been much misinterpreted and misunderstood. The following statement, in his own words, will place the fact in its true point of view. "At the close of the year 1772, and the beginning of the next, an attempt was made by himself and a few other clergymen, among whom were Mr. Francis Wollaston,

Wollaston, Dr. Percy, now Bishop of Dromore, and Dr. York, now Bishop of Ely, to induce the Bishops to promote a review of the Liturgy and Articles, in order to amend in both, but particularly in the latter, those parts which all reasonable persons agreed stood in need of amendment. This plan was not in the smallest degree connected with the Petitioners at the Feathers Tavern, but on the contrary, was meant to counteract that and all similar extravagant projects; to strengthen and confirm our Ecclesiastical Establishment; to repel the attacks which were at that time continually made upon it by its avowed enemies; to render the 17th Article on Predestination and Election more clear and perspicuous, and less liable to be wrested by our adversaries to a Calvinistic sense, which has been so unjustly affixed to it; to improve true

Christian piety amongst those of our own communion, and to diminish schism and separation by bringing over to the National church all the moderate and well-disposed of other persuasions. On these grounds we applied, in a private and respectful manner, to Archbishop Cornwallis, requesting him to signify our wishes, (which we conceived to be the wishes of a very large proportion both of the clergy and the laity) to the rest of the Bishops, that every thing might be done, which could be *prudently* and *safely* done, to promote these important and salutary purposes.

"The answer given by the Archbishop, February 11, 1773, was in these words: 'I have consulted severally my 'brethren the Bishops, and it is the 'opinion of the Bench in general, that 'nothing can in prudence be done in

'the

'the matter that has been submitted to 'our consideration.'"

There can be no question that this decision, viewed in all its bearings, was right; and Dr. Porteus, and those with whom he acted, entirely acquiesced in it. They had done their duty in submitting to the Bench such alterations as appeared to them to be conducive to the credit and the interest of the Church of England, and of religion in general; and their manner of doing it was most temperate and respectful. At the same time, as it appears to me, the proposal was rejected on very satisfactory and sufficient grounds. That in our Established Liturgy there are some redundancies which might be spared, and some changes which might be made with advantage, few will be disposed to deny. That in the Articles also, a clearer and more

intelligible

intelligible mode of expression might in parts be introduced, and some passages amended or expunged, which give a colour to false interpretation, may equally be conceded. But the main point to be considered is, whether, however desirable it may be to remove all possible ground of separation and schism, such alterations as those suggested, or even any at all, would produce that effect. It has been said by an eminent Divine, that "it is not in the wit or in the power of man to prevent diversity of opinion, since this is the unavoidable result of human imperfection and human liberty, and is not to be removed, unless we had more light or less agency." Suppose then the Liturgy and Articles to undergo a revision, would the consequence be an union of sentiment? What one approved, there would be still another to condemn; and

and even "amongst the moderate and well-disposed of other persuasions," I fear the Church, with all her concessions, would gain few converts. It is always dangerous to innovate, more so in things connected with religion than in any other; and, after all, is there any absolute need of change? "The men," says Dr. Hey, "who were at the head of the Reformation, were men of the first ability. As scholars, we are mere children to them. They were conversant in Scripture to a degree of which few now have any conception. Ecclesiastical history lay open before them. Yet they were not *mere* scholars, nor monks, nor monkish men; but skilled in government, knowing men and manners, liberal in behaviour, free from all fanaticism, full of probity, yet guided in their measures by prudence. None then could be chosen more likely to

frame

frame a good set of Forms and Articles. They would fall short of nothing attainable through indolence or cowardice. They would set down nothing carelessly, on the presumption of its passing unexamined. They would overshoot nothing, in the hope of catching a few. They had in short nothing for it, but to fix on that which right reason and good feelings would embrace." Surely then in the labours of these illustrious men we may contentedly acquiesce. They were the result of fervent piety, profound learning, consummate prudence, long, anxious, and patient deliberation; and I should therefore think any change inexpedient and unwise, which was not demanded by a strong necessity, and justified by the clear and certain prospect of some decisive advantage.

The period had now arrived when Dr. Porteus was to be called to that high

high station in the Church, to which his character and talents so well entitled him, and which he afterwards filled with so much credit to himself, and so much advantage to his country. On the 20th of December 1776, he kissed the King's hand on his promotion to the see of Chester; a preferment on his own part perfectly unsolicited, and so entirely unlooked for, that, till a short time before it happened, he had not the smallest expectation of it. In consequence of this accession of dignity, which was conferred in the most flattering and gracious manner, he resigned the living of Lambeth, though he had permission to retain it: but he thought that with so many additional cares he should not be able to attend to so large a benefice, at least to the satisfaction of his own mind; and he therefore hesitated not a moment in giving

giving it up into other hands. It was a resolution founded only on a strong sense of duty; for it was with feelings of sincere and painful regret that he discontinued his pastoral connexion with a parish, where he had lived with many on terms of friendly intercourse, and in which he had so much reason to hope that he had not laboured in vain. But the affairs of a large diocese now demanded his attention, and to these he determined to sacrifice every other consideration.

From various causes, it was not till the 4th of July 1777, that he went to Chester, where he lost no time in entering with zeal and ardour into the functions of his office. As soon as circumstances would permit, he confirmed in several places, and in the summer of the year following held his primary visitation.

The

The Charge which he delivered to his clergy on that occasion was printed at their request, and is now for the first time added to his Works. Why it was omitted in the volume of tracts which he afterwards published, I am unable to say. It is undoubtedly a performance of great merit, and should not be suffered to sink into oblivion. The reader will find in it the main outlines of the clerical character very ably drawn. The education which a clergyman should receive; the peculiar studies which he should afterwards prosecute; the dignity and importance of the ministry; the various duties, exclusively of the mere stated discharge of the offices of the church, which are inseparably attached to it; the advantages of personal residence upon his cure; more especially the indispensable necessity of *example*, to give weight and efficacy to

his

his instruction; all these considerations are urged with force and impression: and, amongst other points, the following remarks, upon a subject deeply involving the respectability of our order, cannot be too widely diffused. "Under the head of *appearance*," says the Bishop, "give me leave to mention the article of *dress*, in which I have observed with concern, that some of the younger clergy in several parts of the kingdom (I mean not particularly in this) have been gradually departing from that gravity and sobriety, which the nature of their profession, as well as the injunctions of the church, require. We are distinguished from all other persons by a peculiar habit, and instead of being ashamed, we ought rather to be proud of it, as a badge of that high and honourable calling to which we have been admitted. If, from a

childish

childish passion for show, we endeavour to drop this distinction as much as possible, and to appear as little like clergymen, as with any decency we can; instead of procuring us admiration and respect, it will only expose us to contempt."

Towards the conclusion of this year, 1778, the Bishop had an opportunity of very highly gratifying his own feelings, by being enabled to relieve the distress of a poor clergyman in his diocese, whose situation and circumstances were made known to him in the following letter:

"My Lord,

"IMPELLED by a gloomy fit of reflection (and many I have, God knows) on my condition; I prostrate myself at your feet, imploring in the humblest manner compassion and regard. If distress has eloquence, and may be permitted to

 plead,

plead, I have, alas! but too powerful an advocate in my favour.

"I am, my Lord, the Curate of Wood Plumpton, near Preston, where I have served, as such, for about forty-two years successively, and led withal an obscure contemplative life. I am now in the sixty-seventh year of my age, and have brought up six sons and six daughters to men's and women's estate, and am grandfather to twenty-seven children. All my annual income is only something more than forty pounds. I had a small tenement here that came by my wife, but, as I had contracted small debts time after time, in so long a series of family occasions, have sold it to discharge those engagements; so that my bare salary is all that I now enjoy for the support of myself and family: and such is the indigence I am reduced to at present, that

were

were it not for religious prospects, I should be wretched beyond the utmost energy of language to express. Although poverty and old age together be but a mortifying fate, yet as to any personal misery, I hope I could defy it to touch me with impatience. But, oh! my Lord, the thing that enervates all my fortitude, and cuts me to the heart, is, to see my poor family in want, and to be a spectator of their misery without the power of relief!

"As you may have the direction of some charities, be pleased to use your influence in the case of

"Your Lordship's

"Faithful servant,

"MATHEW WORTHINGTON."

It will easily be imagined, that a letter such as this, written with all the pathetic

eloquence of undissembled distress, could not fail to make a strong impression on a feeling mind. The Bishop was exceedingly struck by it; and with the assistance of the Chancellor, Dr. Peploe, immediately opened a subscription, towards which he contributed largely himself, as a temporary relief: soon after which, the Living of Childwell, a vicarage in his gift, becoming vacant by resignation, he immediately presented it to Mr. Worthington. I have related this occurrence, not only because it is in itself an extremely interesting one, but as it marks a very conspicuous feature in the Bishop's character; namely, the eagerness with which his mind always seized a benevolent object. It was not a mere compliance with judgment. It was not a frigid, dilatory, reluctant charity, extorted by the occasion. On the contrary, I

never

never yet saw any one, who appeared to me to possess, in a more exalted degree, the true spirit of beneficence. It came warm from the heart, unchecked by cold calculation; whilst the good he did became doubly valuable by his manner of doing it.

On the 10th of March 1779, a motion was made in the House of Commons, for leave to bring in a Bill for the further relief of Protestant Dissenters; the purport of which was to exempt them from subscription to the Articles, and to entitle them to the full benefit of the Act of Toleration, on their taking the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and subscribing the Declaration against Popery. To this the Bench had no objection; but were at the same time of opinion, that in a Christian country none ought to be allowed to preach or teach without some

formal acknowledgment of their being Christians and Protestants, and that they will make the Scriptures the rule of their faith and practice. Upon this principle it was agreed to move an amendment to the Bill, containing a declaration to that effect, and with the exception of a few expressions, the same with that proposed by the Dissenters themselves, on a former application to Parliament in 1773. In the Bishop's papers, I find the following reasons assigned for the part which he himself took in this question.

"On the most mature consideration," he says, "I am clearly of opinion that some declaration was proper and necessary, and that for several reasons. First, Because the English clergy in general, and many of the laity, would have been, and I think justly, exceedingly dissatisfied, had the Bishops consented to an unlimited

limited indulgence of religious opinions, without any declaration at all.

"Secondly, When any one applies for liberty to preach and teach, the State has a right to know what *the leading principles* of his religion are, in order to be assured that they contain nothing injurious to civil society, or to the established form of Government.

"Thirdly, If there be no declaration, not only Protestant Dissenters, but Mahometans, Deists, Atheists and Pagans, will by this Bill be entitled to preach and teach their opinions with impunity; for any of these may *pretend* to be Protestant Dissenters. And although these may be *connived at*, as they now are, so long as they behave peaceably and inoffensively, yet I apprehend the Legislature would not choose to give them *a legal toleration*. Indeed some of their opinions are

 dangerous

dangerous to the State. A Mahometan, for instance, holds it lawful to propagate his religion by the sword; and Mr. Locke himself thinks that Atheism ought not to be tolerated. Certain however it is, that the intention of the *present* Bill is to give relief to Protestant Dissenters only; and therefore there ought to be some test, to distinguish who *are* and who *are not* Protestant Dissenters. This, I think, will be sufficiently done by the proposed Declaration."

It was accordingly proposed by Lord North himself to be inserted as a clause in the Bill, which was at last agreed to, though not till after much opposition from several members, particularly from Mr. Wilkes, whose language on that occasion forms a very sufficient illustration of his religious principles. He contended for unlimited, universal toleration; observing,

" that

"that Mr. Locke was much *too confined* in his notions, when he asserted that Atheists ought not to be tolerated. For his own part, he should wish to see pagodas, mosques, and temples of the sun, rising up in the neighbourhood of our finest gothic cathedrals." Notwithstanding this pious declamation, the clause was agreed to; and when the Bill was brought into the House of Lords, it passed unanimously without debate or division. "Thus," says the Bishop, "what the Dissenters had been so long struggling for, and for which they had twice before applied to Parliament in vain, was at length obtained. It was a measure generally approved as wise and just, and no less consonant to the principles of sound policy, than to the genuine spirit of the Gospel."

Whilst the Government and the Church

of

of England were acting with this moderation towards the Protestant Dissenters, it was reasonable that some indulgence should be shewn to the Roman Catholics; and accordingly in the course of this year an Act was passed, repealing a severe, oppressive law, which had been enacted against them in the reign of King William. But this measure, though sanctioned on the same principles of charity, and grounded on the same policy, was very differently received. In Scotland, the Calvinistic clergy, in particular, immediately took the alarm; and from the exasperating language of their sermons, aided by some furious pamphlets, which were disseminated amongst the people, many disgraceful outrages were committed in various places; public meetings were held for the security of the established religion, and the General

Assembly

Assembly even passed a vote, that any alteration of the penal laws against Papists would be dangerous to civil and religious liberty. About the same time a similar spirit, though at first less violent in degree, manifested itself in England. A Protestant Association, as it was called, was formed in London, the avowed design of which was to oppose the progress of Popery, and to counteract the effects of the late Act, which was affirmed to be of the most dangerous tendency. It was stated that several Popish schools, and mass houses, which had before been kept private, were made public; that many new ones were opened in several parts of the Metropolis, and that the numbers resorting to them greatly increased. At the same time the Association disclaimed persecution, as contrary to the Christian rule, and professed to make use of no

other

other means, but what were clearly consistent with moderation and prudence. All this was plausible: and had it in a single case been clearly substantiated, that a priest or his congregation had refused to take the oath prescribed by the Act; that doctrines had been inculcated injurious to the Constitution; or that any attempts had been made to seduce Protestants from their faith; there would then have been sufficient ground for alarm: but no such facts were made out in evidence.

The Bishop's sentiments upon this subject are perfectly just, and worthy of his own liberal and enlightened mind. "Undoubtedly," he says, "we ought to be on our guard against the arts and industry of those who profess to teach the tenets of Popery; we ought to combat their manifold errors, as occasions offer, both in

in the pulpit and from the press; and we should in an especial manner instil carefully into the minds of the young, the true principles of Protestantism. But, on the other hand, admitting the facts, as represented, to be true, if it appears that the schools and mass houses so much complained of, are only frequented by persons of the Roman Catholic persuasion; if the priests and their congregations take the prescribed oath; if no undue endeavours are used to make proselytes, and no doctrines are taught hostile to the government of the country; I do not see how, on the principles of Toleration or of Christianity, any other opposition can be made to them, but that of argument and persuasion, and increased activity and zeal on our part in guarding those intrusted to our care against the superstitions and errors of the Church of Rome."

This

This surely is precisely the language as well of sound reason as of true religion: but it was not that which answered the views of the Protestant Association. Men under the influence of passion and prejudice are not easily repressed; and therefore, though against the concurrent opinion of the Bishops and the whole body of the English Clergy, they determined, as they expressed themselves, in the most prudent and respectful manner—in other words, at the head of 150,000 people—to present their petition to Parliament. The consequences, as is well known, were the riots of 1780, when a scene of desperate outrage was exhibited in this Metropolis, than which nothing could be more disgraceful to the national character, or more injurious to the credit of the Established Faith.

Early in 1781, the returns to an inquiry,

inquiry, which the House of Lords had ordered to be made, into the number of Papists in England and Wales, were laid upon the table: when Earl Ferrers, who had moved for that inquiry, observed, that it appeared evidently from these returns, that there had been a very considerable increase of Papists in this kingdom, and particularly in the Diocese of Chester. "In that Diocese," he said, "the number in 1717, was 10,308; in 1767, it was 25,139; and at this time the number given in to the House amounts to 27,228. He therefore submitted to their Lordships, whether it would not be highly expedient to lay such restrictions upon the Catholics, as might, consistently with the true principles of liberality and candour, prevent their further increase. He was no friend to persecution; but he believed the spirit of Popery was not changed;

changed: and if it was allowed to spread in the minds of the multitude without control, the worst consequences at a future period might be justly apprehended."

This proposition, as the facts on which it rested referred principally to his own Diocese, made it necessary for the Bishop to reply; and he has left the following abstract, as the substance of his speech on that occasion. "As the discussion of this subject appeared to me exceedingly dangerous, and as I well knew that there was no just ground for dreading any increase of Popery, I thought it right to say something in answer to Lord Ferrers; and undertook to prove, that his statement of the number of Catholics in the Diocese of Chester in the year 1717, was extremely erroneous, having been taken only from very inaccurate

curate returns to Bishop Gaskell's visitatorial inquiries, and not from any parliamentary survey, which alone could be depended upon: that two such surveys had been lately taken of the number of Papists in England and Wales, one in 1767, the other in 1780; that the number returned at the former period was 67,916, at the latter, 69,376; that the increase therefore, in these thirteen years, throughout the whole kingdom, was only 1,460, and that this was owing entirely, not to the increase of Popery, but to the increase of population: that I had in my own possession, in consequence of inquiries made upon the subject, very convincing proofs, that in the diocese of Chester alone there had been within the last sixty years an increase of more than 250,000 souls, and that this would more than account for the progress which

Popery had made in that See. Upon the whole I contended, that, considering the great increase of general population in this realm, the Catholics were a *decreasing* rather than an *increasing* quantity, and that there was therefore no ground for the alarms, which some well-meaning but certainly not well-informed people had taken on that subject. These observations were satisfactory to the House, and Lord Ferrers withdrew his motion."

Whilst however the Bishop of Chester thus expressed his sentiments in Parliament, and endeavoured to rectify errors, which, if left uncontradicted, might have ended to inflame the already irritated state of the public mind against the Catholics of this country, he was not unmindful of the real nature of their religion, nor inattentive in guarding those

committed

committed to his care against its false and dangerous tenets. As the best and mildest and most effectual mode of doing this, he addressed a Letter to his clergy, and at the same time printed for the use of his diocese, in the compendious form of a small tract, the substance of five very admirable sermons by Archbishop Secker, which appeared to him to contain the most complete refutation of Popery that he had ever seen in so small a compass. It is indeed one of the many treatises on this subject, which should be particularly put into the hands of those, who are at all unsettled and wavering in their religious principles. It is a short, perspicuous statement of all the points at issue between Papists and Protestants. The spirit in which it is written is truly Christian, and the general argument, in my judgment, and, I think,

in the judgment of every unprejudiced and candid man, is altogether unanswerable.

Besides the dispersion of this valuable little tract, the Bishop made it a primary object in the course of visiting his See, to inquire as minutely as possible into the conduct of the Catholics; directing his clergy to keep a vigilant eye upon their motions, and to inform him of any transactions respecting them, which were worthy of notice: and I have his authority for saying, that the result of this inquiry was, that he could not find that they had in any instance attempted to make converts; that they adhered quietly to their own persuasion, without disturbing the faith of their Protestant neighbours; and that so far from adding to their numbers, a Popish priest had on the contrary been converted, and

regularly

regularly admitted into the Church of England.

These were important facts at that time; and I have entered more largely into the subject than perhaps I otherwise might, under the conviction that they are not unimportant now. It is the full persuasion of my own mind, that the Catholics in this country, whatever may be the case in Ireland, are content with the liberty of maintaining their own doctrines, and their own forms of worship, without endeavouring to proselyte others; that their numbers only increase in proportion to the increase of population; and that in the present advanced state of public knowledge, Protestantism has nothing to apprehend from the toleration of Popery. In fact, the real evils to be dreaded, and on which the attention of every man zealous for the preservation

and the honour of Christianity should be incessantly fixed, are dissoluteness of manners, and the diffusion of infidel opinions. These, if I may use the term, are the PYTHONS we should strive to crush. They are destructive monsters, which assail the vitals of religion. They strike at the very foundation and root of all social virtue and all social order; and it is therefore against these, above every thing, that our penal laws should be framed, and the power of the magistrate directed. The great Prelate, whose life is the subject of these pages, undoubtedly so thought and acted. He was never wanting in zeal for the Church; but as one of the guardians of that Church, he was persuaded that zeal could never be so well employed as against vice and infidelity.

The following statement I insert exactly as

as I find it. It marks in the strongest manner his vigilant, firm, and persevering mind, and the unremitting assiduity with which he ever laboured to discharge the high and sacred duties of a Christian Bishop.

"The beginning of the winter of 1780," he observes, "was distinguished by the rise of a new species of dissipation and profaneness. A set of needy and profligate adventurers, finding every day and almost every hour, of the week occupied by some amusement or other, bethought themselves of trying what might be done on a Sunday. It was a novel and a bold attempt, but not the less likely to succeed in this country and in these times. They therefore opened and publicly advertised two different sorts of entertainment for the Sunday evening. One of these was at Carlisle House, and was called a Pro-

and difficulty started there as an unanswerable argument against religion, and would go home absolute sceptics, if not confirmed unbelievers. Thus, as the Promenade tended to destroy every moral sentiment, the Theological Assemblies were calculated to extinguish every religious principle; and both together threatened the worst consequences to public morals.

"It was therefore highly necessary to put a speedy and effectual stop to such alarming evils. I mentioned it early in the winter to several persons of rank and authority, and waited a considerable time in the hope, that some one of more weight and influence than myself would have stood forth on this occasion. But the Session being now far advanced, and finding no one inclined to take the matter up, it became absolutely necessary to do

something;

something; and I therefore resolved to try what my own exertions would do. I first consulted several eminent lawyers, as well as the principal acting magistrates in Westminster, in order to know, whether either the statute or the common law, *as they now stood*, was sufficient to check this evil. They all assured me that both were insufficient, and that nothing but an Act of Parliament, framed on purpose, could effectually suppress it. In consequence of this opinion, I applied to a legal friend, and with his assistance got a proper Bill sketched out, which I afterwards shewed to Lord Bathurst, President of the Council, and to Sir John Skinner, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer; and it was afterwards communicated to the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, and Lord Mansfield. After it had received their approbation, I applied to the Soli-

citor

citor General, Mr. Mansfield, who undertook to move it in the House of Commons; and Sir William Dolben agreed to second it. This they did on the 3d of May 1781, and the Bill was intitled, 'An Act for preventing certain Abuses 'and Profanations on the Lord's Day, 'commonly called Sunday.' It was violently opposed in its different stages through the House by several members, particularly Mr. Wilkes; but it passed without a division. On the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, it was opposed principally by the Duke of Manchester, who thought that there were not sufficient proofs of the mischievous tendency of the Sunday evening amusements. 'The subjects of this kingdom,' he said, 'should be left at perfect liberty to confer upon religious subjects without control: and he did not believe that

there

there was any thing improper either in the Promenade or the Societies. In his apprehension they were perfectly innocent: but, even if the fact were otherwise, there were laws already in force sufficient to restrain them; and there was no necessity to add to the number of our penal statutes, already sufficiently numerous.'

"In answer to this, I observed, that although there was no evidence at the bar, to prove the allegations of the preamble, which in a public Bill, and in a matter of such notoriety, I conceived was seldom, if ever required; yet there were the very best grounds for believing the pernicious tendency of the Sunday evening amusements to be much greater than the preamble stated. I had conversed with many persons, who had themselves been present in these places, and

was

was perfectly satisfied that they were highly dangerous in every point of view. But, even without entering into their interior constitution and consequences, I could not but think that the very external appearance of them on the Lord's Day, was an offence against common decency, and the most antient and venerable customs of this country. They were places of public amusement opened on a Sunday. They were publicly advertised; were in a public room; money was publicly taken at the door, and that for the avowed purpose of public amusement. This, I apprehended, was the very definition of a public diversion; and it was notorious, that public diversions had never been permitted by the laws of the land in this kingdom, from the time of the Reformation to the present moment; and I hoped they never would. In

Popish

Popish countries they were indeed permitted, though even there they were condemned by many serious men; for a friend of mine, Dr. Lort, in the year 1768, saw an injunction or admonition of the Archbishop of Mechlin, in one of the towns under his jurisdiction, in which he complained heavily of the liberties taken by the people on Sundays, and spoke in high terms of the conduct of the Heretics, that is, the Protestants, in that respect. But, however these indulgences might suit the spirit of Popery, they did not accord with the temper of Protestantism. They were contrary to the spirit of our constitution; contrary to the spirit of our laws and our religion: They were new invasions of the sanctity of the Lord's Day, and had never been heard of in this country till within these few years. The different method of observing

observing Sunday in England and in foreign countries, was one great mark of distinction between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, and it was a distinction which I hoped never to see abolished. It was not my wish to go to the Church of Rome to know in what manner Sunday ought to be observed in England. I was therefore for resisting these dangerous innovations in the very beginning. If they were not crushed at their very outset, it was impossible to say how far they might go. If the Legislature suffered them to pass at first without notice, their Lordships must not imagine the mischief would stop where it now is. The places of entertainment lately opened for the Sunday evening, were only the beginnings of a regular plan to introduce *Sunday diversions* into this kingdom; they are only

trials

trials and experiments to *feel the way*, and to see how the Government will bear such violations of decency; and if the proprietors of these places find that they are perfectly secure, they will very soon take care to have fresh amusements for every hour of the Sunday, even for those which ought to be spent in the celebration of divine worship. Unless therefore their Lordships were prepared to say, that public diversions ought to be allowed in this country, they must resist this artful attempt to introduce them under the specious name of a Promenade, and the sacred plea of religion.

"It has been said, indeed, that this Bill is a restraint upon religious liberty. It is no such thing. It restrains no one from professing that mode of religion, and joining in that form of public worship, which his conscience best approves.

It restrains no one from speaking, conversing, or writing upon religious subjects. It imposes no other restraint than this, which is surely no very great hardship, that *no one shall either pay or be paid for talking blasphemy or profaneness in a public room on the Lord's Day.* It takes away, in short, no other liberty, but the liberty of burlesquing Scripture, and making religion a public amusement, and a public trade, which I was inclined to think their Lordships would not consider essential marks of religious freedom."

A division then took place on the commitment of the Bill, which was carried by a majority of 26; and it afterwards passed without further opposition.

In this manner did the Bishop, by his own energy and perseverance, carry through Parliament an Act, which by its judicious

judicious provisions effectually checked a most wicked and licentious system, calculated to produce the worst consequences to religion and to public morals. There were many difficulties in the way, which would have staggered, as in fact they did stagger, ordinary minds. But his was not of that stamp. He saw them all, and surmounted them. He stood alone against a crying evil, and succeeded. It was the opinion indeed of Lord Mansfield at the time, that the Bill, though in itself a good one, would soon be evaded. But contrary to the sentiments of that great lawyer the very reverse has been the case. It has completely answered its object; and from the period of its passing into a law no attempts have been made, in the same way at least, to profane and desecrate the Christian Sabbath.

Towards the close of 1781, the great question between the then Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, and Mr. Disney Fytche, a gentleman of Essex, with respect to the validity of a general bond of resignation, that is a bond to resign, whenever called upon by the patron, came to a hearing in the Court of Chancery; when it was determined by Lord Loughborough, that such bonds were good in law.—Notwithstanding however this decision, it was deemed expedient, in a matter of such consequence, to carry the cause before the House of Lords; and it must ever redound to the Bishop of Chester's honour, that such a man as Bishop Lowth, who in the fullest meaning of his own words, as applied to Archbishop Secker, was "vir summus summo in loco," but who was then unable from illness to attend in Parliament, should

particularly

particularly have selected and requested him to undertake the management of it. I mention the circumstance, merely with the view of marking the high sense which that distinguished Prelate entertained of his character and talents. With respect to the contest itself, the issue is well known. The judgments of the Courts below were reversed; general bonds of resignation, when given, as in the present case, to *procure a presentation*, were declared to be illegal, and the presentation procured by them to be corrupt, simoniacal and void.

On February 11th, 1783, the Bishop preached before "the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel;" and he chose as his subject, the Civilization and Conversion of the Negroes in the British West-India Islands. It appears that for

some time before this he had turned his mind very much to the condition of that oppressed and suffering people, and had corresponded and conversed on the subject with several persons possessing property in the Islands, and others in this country. The result of his inquiry was, that the state of the Negroes was a most deplorable one, as well in a temporal as a spiritual point of view; and he therefore thought himself called upon by every principle of justice and of policy to excite if possible the attention of the public to this great question. This he did, in the first instance, by recommending it strongly to the Society, in the discourse which he addressed to them, to begin on their own trust-estate in Barbadoes a regular system of religious instruction, as an example to the planters, and to appropriate a portion of their funds to so

desirable

desirable a purpose. The suggestion at the time met with general approbation; and he was therefore induced early in the following year to lay before the Society a plan* which he had drawn up, and in which he had the concurrence of several of the Bench, and other intelligent friends, for carrying it into execution. It however very soon appeared that nothing would be done; for a Committee, to whom, after much opposition, the question was referred, gave it as their opinion in a short sitting of four hours, that his Lordship merited the thanks of the Society

* This plan is now incorporated in "an Essay," which he afterwards printed and published, "towards the more effectual Civilization and Conversion of the Negro Slaves on the Trust Estate in Barbadoes, belonging to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts." The reader will find it in his Volume of Tracts.

Society for the great pains and trouble he had taken, but that the circumstances of the Society rendered it at that time unadvisable to adopt the plan.

"Thus," says the Bishop, "was a final period put at once to a most interesting and important subject, and the spiritual condition of near half a million of Negro Slaves decided in four hours. That the particular plan offered to the Society might stand in need of improvement, and that a better might have been substituted in its room, is very probable. I would have given my hearty vote for any wiser plan in preference to my own. It was not the *mode*, it was the *measure*, I had at heart. But that the discussion of this subject should have been entirely finished at one meeting, which every one expected would have taken up two or three; that no other plan should be adopted

adopted or proposed, nor any one effectual measure taken for the conversion and salvation of near 300 Slaves, who were the immediate property of a *religious* Society, did, I own, a little surprise me. The Society had undoubtedly an opportunity of rendering their name illustrious in every part of the world, by beginning on *their own* plantation the civilization and conversion of the Negroes, and thereby at once shewing the possibility of it, and the method of doing it, and setting an example, which might excite the attention, and by degrees the imitation, of all the West-India proprietors. If this example be not set; if this attempt be not made by a Society, whose professed purpose is to 'propagate the Gospel in Foreign Parts' among Infidels and Heathens; by whom is there the least probability that it can or will be undertaken?

undertaken? It is not small difficulties, it is not *great* difficulties, that should have deterred us from an undertaking, in which our credit, our reputation, our interest, and the interests of religion, are so essentially concerned. Nothing less than *an absolute demonstrable impossibility* should have discouraged us from the attempt. This was the opinion of Bishop Gibson half a century ago, as expressed in the admirable Letters which he wrote upon this subject; and it is, I will venture to say, the opinion of every unprejudiced man in this kingdom, who has considered the subject with sufficient attention and sufficient sensibility."

From this passage, it appears evidently that the Bishop was both disappointed and hurt by such a hasty rejection, on the part of the Society, of a plan on which he had bestowed considerable care

and

and thought, and which it was admitted came within the letter and spirit of their charter. But though he failed in this endeavour, he was not discouraged, as the following pages will shew, from pursuing steadily his favourite object, the civilization and conversion of the Negro Slaves in our West-India colonies.

In the mean time his attention to the duties of his diocese was constant and unwearied. Amongst other things, he took infinite pains to establish an annual subscription for the relief of his poorer clergy. Such an institution, more particularly in the Archdeaconry of Richmond, was greatly wanted; and by urging the subject in the course of conversation, and circulating besides a printed letter, in which he very strongly pressed the necessity of the measure, he at last succeeded.

His

His efforts were also directed with the same active zeal to the establishment of Sunday Schools. Of this admirable plan, first suggested by Mr. Robert Raikes, of Gloucester, for diffusing amongst the poor the principles of religious knowledge, at an age when they are most capable of receiving them, and in a manner which in no respect interferes with their ordinary occupations, he had early conceived a very favourable opinion, and in several instances privately encouraged it. But, as an act of prudence, he determined not to give it the sanction of his public approbation, till, as he observes, "time and experience, and more accurate inquiry, had enabled him to form a more decided judgment of its real value, and its probable effects." When, however, repeated information from various quarters, and particularly

from

from some of the largest manufacturing towns in his diocese, had convinced him that such institutions, wherever the experiment had been fairly tried, had produced, and could not fail to produce, if discreetly regulated, essential benefit, he no longer hesitated in promoting them generally throughout his diocese. With this view, as the wisest and most effectual mode of giving publicity to his sentiments, he addressed to his clergy a very excellent letter, containing, in a short compass, a plain, temperate, and judicious exposition of the advantages of Sunday Schools, and of the rules by which they should be conducted.

The time had now arrived, when the Bishop of Chester was destined to fill a still more distinguished situation in the English church. The high character he

he had long maintained; his zeal, his activity, his judgment, his powers of usefulness in every branch of his profession, and all these illustrated and adorned by a most unblemished life, and the most conciliating and attracting manners; naturally marked him out as a person eminently qualified to supply the vacancy which had for some time been expected in the See of London. Accordingly, the very next day after the death of Dr. Lowth, which took place at the Palace at Fulham, November the 3d, 1787, the Bishop, who was then at Hunton, received by a king's messenger the following letter from Mr. Pitt:

"My Lord,

"In consequence of the death of the Bishop of London, which took place yesterday, I lost no time in making it

it my humble recommendation to His Majesty, that your Lordship might be appointed to succeed him. I have this moment received His Majesty's answer, expressing His entire approbation of the proposal, and authorizing me to acquaint your Lordship with His gracious intentions. I have peculiar satisfaction in executing this commission, and in the opportunity of expressing the sentiments of high respect and esteem with which I have the honour to be,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient

"and most humble servant,

"W. PITT."

This important communication, made in such flattering and gracious terms, was most gratifying to the Bishop's feelings: but yet the high station to which

which he was raised did not for a moment carry his thoughts from the great and only Disposer of all earthly good. Much as he felt the honour conferred upon him by his Sovereign, he looked beyond this world, up to Him, who is the King of kings; for, subjoined to a copy of the preceding letter, are written in his own hand the following words; "I acknowledge the goodness of a kind Providence, and am fully sensible that nothing but this could have placed me in a situation so infinitely transcending my expectations and deserts."

This appointment, like all that he had before filled, was on his own part perfectly unsought for and unsolicited. So far indeed from being desirous of a change of station, he had on the contrary many substantial reasons for wishing to

to retain the Bishopric of Chester. During his residence in that city, the attention he had uniformly shewed to all ranks of people; the ease and affability of his whole deportment; his kindness to all who needed his assistance; the warm interest he took in the affairs of his clergy; his endeavours to promote in every way the cause of religion, and the good of those committed to his charge; all this had placed him high in public estimation, and rendered him in every part of his diocese respected and beloved. It was not therefore without much regret, and a hard struggle with his own feelings, that he quitted a situation to which he was most sincerely attached, to enter upon another, where the duties were more burthensome, and the responsibility greatly increased.

In addition to this, he was under the necessity, by accepting the See of London, of giving up his living at Hunton; that calm, delightful retreat, where he had spent so many years of happiness, and which, I am persuaded, no accession of dignity, no increase of revenue, would have ever induced him to resign, had it not been for the high and honourable principle, which in all circumstances governed him through life—the relinquishment of private enjoyment for the sake of public usefulness. To those who knew him well, as it was my privilege to do, it is superfluous to say, that he quitted this favourite residence with infinite regret. His own words will best express what he felt upon the occasion.

"When I took my leave of Hunton early in the morning, and cast a parting look

look on the rich vale below, (the sun shining gloriously upon it, and lighting up all the beauties of that enchanting scene) my heart sunk within me; and as I went slowly up the hill, I could not forbear repeating and applying to myself those exquisite lines of the Minstrel,

O! how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms, which Nature to her vot'ries yields;
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of Morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of Even;
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven;
O! how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiv'n!

"It was indeed a long time before I could forgive *myself*. But various circumstances rendered this sacrifice necessary; and by degrees custom reconciled me to a scene very different from that to

which I had been so long accustomed, and which it cost me no small pain to renounce."

After kissing the King's hand for his new See, on the 8th of November 1787, and being confirmed at Bow Church on the 7th of December following, one of the first objects which engaged the Bishop's mind was the advancement of a Society, which had been set on foot about a year before, and which bore the title of "The Society for enforcing the King's Proclamation against Immorality and Profaneness." The necessity of taking some active measures for endeavouring to check, if possible, the increasing profligacy of the times, had been long apparent; and it was thought that it would be one very likely mode of furthering that important purpose, if

persons

persons of distinguished name and character would combine together to enforce the execution of the laws, and to support the magistrates in the conviction of offenders. This, by great perseverance, was at last effected; and the Bishop, who had been from the first a zealous promoter of the Association, and afterwards was elected President of it, had the satisfaction of seeing it productive of the best results. Many useful Acts of Parliament were obtained by its influence; many persons were prosecuted and punished for disseminating licentious books; and amongst other acts of beneficial interference, a check was in *some* measure given to that most pernicious custom of exhibiting publicly indecent prints. Most earnestly is it to be wished that it could be repressed altogether; and if this cannot be done by any statute at present in force,

it is surely incumbent upon the wisdom of the Legislature to take the subject into consideration, and to enact some positive law, which, by the infliction of a heavy penalty, may ultimately tend to the annihilation of a system, than which there can be none more injurious to good morals, nor any more prejudicial to the best interests of a State.

On the 10th of July 1788, Sir William Dolben's Slave-carrying Bill passed the Lords; an event which afforded the Bishop the utmost satisfaction. During its progress, so great was his anxiety for its success that he attended the House daily from Fulham for a month together; but had the fatigue of that attendance been even greater than it was, he would most cheerfully have submitted to it with such an object in view. The measure indeed fell far short of the whole extent of

his

his wishes: but, as under the existing circumstances, more could hardly be expected, he considered it, as in fact it was, a most important measure; since it lessened, at least in some degree, the horrors of the passage, and prevented the merchants from crowding into their ships too large a number of slaves, under the alarm of an approaching abolition of the trade itself. About the same time, on a motion by Lord Bathurst for an address to His Majesty, to instruct the Governors of the Islands to secure, by some legislative measure, a better treatment of the slaves, and provide for their religious instruction, he expressed in the strongest terms his entire approbation of the noble Earl's proposition; and availed himself of that opportunity to assure the House, that in the hope of promoting particularly the last of these purposes, he had

addressed to the Clergy of the different Islands a circular letter, earnestly exhorting them to take the condition of the Negroes in their respective parishes into their consideration, and to instruct them in the principles of the Christian Faith.

On the 23d of April in the following year 1789, in obedience to the King's express command, he preached at St. Paul's on the day of public thanksgiving for His Majesty's recovery. The subject which he chose was, "Trust in God," and he enforced it with all that warmth and spirit and energy which the peculiar circumstances of the case, and a scene so uncommonly grand and striking could hardly fail to inspire. That part of his discourse, which bears more immediately upon the occasion, is touched with great delicacy and judgment. There

There is no elaborate eulogy, no overcharged description; but he stated simply and strongly, what he knew upon *indubitable authority* to be true, that "the heart of his Sovereign was deeply impressed with the conviction, that in God was his help; and that throughout the whole of his severe trial his trust in God had never forsaken him." Of the reality of this declaration, I believe, out of all that vast assembly, there was not an individual present who entertained the slightest doubt. It came home to every one's feelings, and called up one united thanksgiving to the Great Disposer of events, for having preserved and restored to them a Monarch, not more illustrious for his high station, than revered and beloved for his many private virtues.

More than two years had passed from the time of his taking possession of the

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See of London before the Bishop held his primary visitation; but the cause of the delay arose, as he himself observes, "from a wish to collect all the information he could from various quarters, and more particularly from the answers to the several queries which had been some months before circulated through the diocese."

With these materials before him, he was enabled to select such topics for his Charge as appeared the most important; and accordingly he insisted principally on the necessity of more constant residence*, an increase of salaries to curates,

* The residence of the beneficed Clergy on their cures was one of the objects, connected with the discipline and good order of the Church, which the Bishop was unceasing in his endeavours to promote; and the following extract from a most useful and able Charge delivered by Mr. Archdeacon Cambridge in 1808, to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Middlesex, is an honourable and convincing proof how successfully

curates, and the improvement of our parochial psalmody. In regard to the last

fully those endeavours were exerted.—"It will now," he says, "be expected, that I should make some report of the state and condition of the Parsonage Houses, which it was a part of my duty to inspect; but it was with real pleasure I found, that the difficulty and trouble, which may readily be supposed to attend the due performance of this delicate branch of our official inquiry, were considerably lessened, and the duty in a great measure anticipated by the unwearied exertions of our excellent Prelate, whose constant endeavour it has been, ever since he presided over this important diocese, to establish resident clergy on every preferment where it was possible to accomplish it; an endeavour, in which he had most meritoriously and successfully persevered for many years previous to the late Act for enforcing the Residence of the Parochial Clergy. Of this, his first concern, the repair and improvement of the parsonage house, in which the incumbent was required to reside, formed an essential and often a preliminary part. And it is now with infinite satisfaction I can state, that with the exception of a very few cases, where accidental circumstances have occasioned delays in the accomplishment of the wishes and directions of the Bishop, on almost every living, the income of which is sufficient to supply the means of maintaining a decent residence for the incumbent, this important object is already attained."

last of these subjects, he states the following reasons for pressing it on the attention of his clergy.

"Of all the Services of our Church, none appear to me to have sunk to so low an ebb, or so evidently to need reform, as our parochial psalmody; more especially, as Dr. Burney, in his History of Music, had very injudiciously taken great pains to ridicule and discredit the use of psalmody in our churches, and to introduce in the room of it cathedral music. In consequence of this, many churches and chapels in London had already adopted his ideas; and at their charity sermons, professional singers, both male and female, were brought from various places of public entertainment to sing hymns and anthems for the benefit of the children. Nay, in one or two churches there had been musical

entertainments

entertainments upon Sunday evenings, without even prayers or a sermon. I therefore thought it highly necessary, in order to prevent our places of public worship from being converted into concert-rooms, to endeavour to check this musical madness, and if possible to bring back our psalmody to its antient purity and simplicity."

For his opinions and advice, both which are extremely judicious upon this subject, I must refer the reader to the Charge itself, which will be found in his Works. It is a composition throughout of great elegance and ability; and there is one circumstance in it which I cannot suffer to pass without notice, namely, the high testimony which it bears to the talents and virtues of his venerable predecessor, Bishop Lowth. The See of London had never been filled

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by a more distinguished prelate; and his successor felt that it would have been an act of injustice to so great a man, if he had not offered some part at least of that tribute which was justly due to his memory, and publicly expressed his deep regret for the loss sustained by the church, and by the world at large. The character he has given of him is forcibly and ably drawn: and, although the necessity of enlarging upon other important matter prevented him from saying *much* upon the subject, he would yet but ill have satisfied his own feelings, or the expectations of his clergy, if, with such an opportunity before him, he had said *less*.

Not many months after his return from the visitation of his diocese, a decree given in his favour by the Court of Chancery enabled him to prosecute a

plan,

plan, which he had long had much at heart, for improving the condition of the Negro Slaves employed in the cultivation of the West-India Islands, and particularly for their better instruction in religious knowledge. As he has left in manuscript the following statement of the causes and consequences of that decree, it is here inserted.

"In 1691, the great Mr. Boyle left a sum of money, amounting to £.5,400. for the advancement of the Christian religion amongst infidels. With this sum an estate was afterwards purchased at Brafferton, near Boroughbridge in Yorkshire. The Earl of Burlington, and the Bishop of London for the time being, were constituted trustees of the charity; and in 1698, they directed that the profits of the estate should be paid to the President of William and Mary College,

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in Virginia, to be by them applied to the education and instruction of a certain number of Indian children. This appointment was confirmed by a decree of the Court of Chancery in 1698. The charity continued to be so applied till the breaking out of the American war, soon after which the then Bishop of London forbad the Agent of the College to remit any more money to Virginia. After the peace, the College claimed the rents of the estate, and all the arrears that had accumulated, which, with the sale of some timber, amounted to a very large sum. This was resisted by Bishop Lowth; and on my succeeding to the See of London, a regular suit in Chancery was commenced between me and the College in Virginia. The question was, whether they, being now separated from this kingdom, and become a

foreign,

foreign, independent state, were entitled to the benefit of this charity. It was the first question of the kind, that had occurred in this country since the American Revolution, and was therefore in the highest degree curious and important. The Chancellor, Lord Thurlow, decided against the College. He excluded them from all share in the charity, and directed that the Trustees should offer a plan for the appropriation of the charity to some other purpose. In consequence of this decree, I gave in to the Master in Chancery, Mr. Orde, my plan for the application of Mr. Boyle's charity, and proposed for its object, *the conversion and religious instruction of the Negroes in the British West-India Islands.* This has been subsequently approved by the Lord Chancellor, and there will now be

 a revenue

a revenue of near £.1,000. per annum, applied to that purpose."

To this, his own account of the origin and establishment of that Society, I am enabled to add from my own personal observation and knowledge, that he not only in his capacity of President took a leading part in all its transactions, but that he was indefatigable in his efforts to promote the objects of it. With the view of rendering the Scriptures more generally useful to the Negroes, he undertook to make a selection of such parts, both of the Old and New Testament, as appeared to him best adapted to their understandings and condition. He spared no pains in procuring able and conscientious ministers to fill the office of missionaries. He corresponded frequently with them on the state of their

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mission. He endeavoured by all the means in his power to conciliate the good-will of the planters, to remove the apprehensions they expressed, and to convince them of the policy as well as humanity of educating and instructing their slaves. In short, he did all that the most active and unwearied zeal could do, to advance in every possible way the great purposes of the institution. If, after all, its success fell short of his hopes, as I have heard him often lament that it did, the failure is to be ascribed, not to want of effort in him, but to difficulties, which, though in some instances overcome, he found in others insuperable. The chief of these always has been, and still continues to be, an invincible reluctance on the part of the proprietors and planters of estates in our West-India colonies, effectually to pro-

mote any plan, however quietly and prudently conducted, for the Christian education of their Negro slaves. To this general assertion indeed, there are, I know, some honourable exceptions; but, on the whole, there does appear to be an increasing disposition, as far as my information and experience enable me to judge, to discountenance and impede all attempts to instruct that unfortunate part of our fellow beings in the principles and practice of religion. I trust, however, that no obstructions, which the Society may experience, will induce them to relax their endeavours. Perseverance may gradually surmount all difficulties. It must, by God's blessing, ultimately triumph; for it stands as the recorded word of that great Being, who has said, "Have I spoken, and shall I not do it?" that "the earth shall be full of the

knowledge

knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

During the interval which elapsed between the Bishop's first and second visitation of his diocese, the French Revolution burst forth; overturning from its very foundation one of the most powerful governments in Europe; substituting a republic in the room of an antient monarchy, and overwhelming all law and order in one wild, sanguinary scene of anarchy and confusion. In a convulsion such as this, which threw down every barrier that the wisdom of ages had raised for the consolidation of a great empire, it was not to be expected that Religion would pass unmolested; and in fact it very soon appeared, that the revolutionists of France aimed at nothing less than the utter subversion of

all moral principle, and the complete abandonment of public worship. Their object was to degrade and vilify the truths of Revelation, and to propagate in its place a blasphemous and infidel philosophy. The attempt succeeded but too effectually in their own country; and the contagion soon spread to this. No efforts were spared, which could tend to contaminate the public mind, and obliterate from it all reverence for our civil and religious establishments; and had it not been for the vigorous measures of that great Minister, who was then at the head of the administration, and to whom, under Providence, we owe our preservation, we might have witnessed here the same frightful scenes, which convulsed and desolated a neighbouring kingdom.

At a crisis such as this, in which all that

that is dear to us hung suspended on the issue, it was plainly every man's bounden duty to exert himself to the utmost for the public welfare: and, in a situation so responsible as the See of London, comprehending a vast metropolis, where the emissaries of infidelity were most actively occupied in their work of mischief, the Bishop felt himself called upon to counteract, as far as in him lay, the licentious principles which were then afloat, and to check, if possible, the progress they had too evidently made in the various ranks of Society. The best mode, as he conceived, of doing this, was to rouse the attention of the clergy to what was passing around them; and nothing surely was ever better calculated to produce that effect, than the Charge which he addressed to them in 1794. I know not where, in a short compass, the character

of the French philosophy is more ably drawn, or its baneful influence more strikingly developed. He had watched its course with an observing eye. He had read all that its advocates could allege in its favour. He had traced the motives which gave it birth, the features by which it was marked, and the *real* objects which it was designed to accomplish. It was not therefore without much deliberation, and a full knowledge of his subject, that he drew up for his sacred visitation that eloquent and most impressive address, in which he gave such a picture of the infidel school of that day, and of the industry which was then employed to disseminate its principles in this country, as at once carried conviction to the mind, and most powerfully awakened the attention of every serious and thinking man. But it was on the clergy, in an especial

manner,

manner, that he was anxious to leave a strong and fixed persuasion of the necessity of increased assiduity and vigilance in the discharge of their religious functions. Christianity, attacked as it was on every side, required more than common efforts, and more than ordinary zeal on the part of its natural defenders; and he therefore called upon them "to repel with vigour and effect all those charges of fraud, falsehood and fanaticism, which had been so liberally thrown upon it at such a perilous crisis to contend with *peculiar* earnestness for 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' and to shew that it is not, as our enemies affirm, 'a cunningly devised fable,' but a *real Revelation from Heaven.*"

In particular he recommended it to them, with a view of stemming more effectually the overwhelming torrent of

 infidel

infidel opinions, "to draw out from the whole body of the Christian Evidences the principal and most striking arguments, and to bring them down to the understandings of the common people." "If this," he says, "or any thing of a similar nature, were thrown into a regular course of sermons or lectures, and delivered in easy, intelligible, familiar language to your respective congregations, I know nothing that would, in these philosophic times, render a more essential service to religion, or tend more to preserve the principles of those entrusted to your care, uncorrupted and unshaken by those most pernicious and dangerous publications, which, I have too much reason to apprehend, will very soon be disseminated with dreadful industry and activity through every quarter of this Island."

It

It is almost superfluous to add, that the effect of this admirable Charge was very soon apparent. It was calculated to make, and it did make, a great impression. The clergy gave full proof, that the advice of their Diocesan had not been offered in vain; and, I am well convinced, that in combination with other causes, the zeal and energy, which they displayed at that period, contributed in no small degree to the defeat of Infidelity, and, by necessary consequence, to the essential welfare of the State.

On the 3d of December 1795, the Bishop presented an address to the King, from himself, the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, and the clergy of the cities of London and Westminster, on the outrage offered to His Majesty by a seditious mob, in his way to the House of Lords; a circumstance

circumstance in his life, which perhaps I should not have mentioned, but that it gave occasion to the assertion of a *right*, which, as it had immemorially been observed, he thought it his duty not to relinquish upon that occasion. The following is his own account of the transaction. When I sent a copy of the Address to the Duke of Portland, and desired him to take the King's pleasure, when he would receive it, he in a few days returned an answer, that His Majesty would receive it not on the throne, but at the levee. As I conceived it did not become me to give up a privilege of the London Clergy, which I knew to be founded in ancient custom, I desired an interview with the Duke, and, on shewing him the papers in my possession, I convinced him that addresses from the Clergy of London were always received

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on the throne. He promised to state this the next day to the King, which he did, and His Majesty very graciously then appointed us to be received on the throne as usual.

It has been already mentioned, that the Bishop filled the situation of President of the Society for enforcing the King's Proclamation against Immorality and Profaneness, and that under his active and discreet direction the licentiousness of the Metropolis had to a certain degree been checked. It was not then probable, that when a publication of such an infamous description, and calculated to produce such infinite mischief as *Paine's Age of Reason*, made its appearance, and was disseminated with inconceivable industry through every town and village of the kingdom, the Society would suffer it to pass unnoticed. The book

book indeed, in point of argument and composition, was perfectly contemptible: but, as the Bishop has well observed, "it was addressed to the *multitude*, and most dexterously brought down to the level of their understandings. It compressed the whole poison of infidelity into the narrow compass of an essence or an extract, and rendered *irreligion easy* to the meanest capacity." The progress therefore of a work like this was to be checked instantly, and with a high hand. It is true, an antidote, and with all thinking men a most effectual one, had been sent abroad into the world, in the admirable answer of Dr. Watson, the present Bishop of Llandaff, but still it was necessary to inflict some signal punishment on the person, who, in violation of all decency, had dared to be the publisher of *The Age of Reason*. The man was a bookseller,

bookseller, of the name of Williams; and against him, though unquestionably only an instrument in the hands of more experienced adepts in the school of infidelity, a prosecution was set on foot in the Court of King's Bench. Upon the issue of this trial, the credit and influence of Religion were in a great measure at stake; and it was therefore of the very last importance, that the cause of the Society should be well defended. Accordingly the Bishops of London and Durham had an interview with Mr. Erskine, who at their joint and earnest request, most cheerfully undertook the management of the prosecution; and it is well known how successfully he employed his splendid talents in the execution of that office. "His speech," says the Bishop, "was a noble specimen of true eloquence on the noblest of all subjects, the defence of Christianity.

There

There were passages in it as sublime as any thing to be met with in the writings of any orator whatever, antient or modern. There is one in particular, uncommonly striking and forcible from the mouth of a layman and a lawyer. Mr. Erskine declared in reply, that tired as he was to the consideration of evidence, he considered the Prophecy concerning the destruction of the Jewish temple and nation to be, even if there were nothing else to support Christianity, *absolutely irresistible.*

In addition to these exertions on the part of their Counsel, the Society received the thanks of Lord Kenyon, for their spirited and manly conduct. In his charge to the Jury, than which nothing could be more able or perspicuous, he spoke of the prosecution in terms of high approbation; and at the same time

availed

availed himself of that opportunity to make a public avowal, in the most solemn language and manner, of his own sincere, deliberate and entire conviction of the truth of Christianity.

Without a moment's hesitation the Jury found the Defendant guilty; and thus was a stop effectually put to the sale of a publication, which concentrated in itself more impiety, and was calculated to inflict a deeper wound on religion, than any that had ever appeared in this or any other country.

In the Charge addressed to his Clergy in 1794, which I have already noticed, it has been seen how strongly he pressed upon them the necessity of greater zeal and activity in their sacred calling. But he never imposed a burthen upon others, of which he was not always disposed and

anxious to take a full share himself; and of this he gave a memorable proof, by undertaking to prepare and deliver in St. James's church, on the Fridays during Lent, a course of Lectures on the Gospel of St. Matthew. The reasons which determined him thus to exert himself out of the ordinary course of his professional duty, at a time of life too then far advanced, and amidst all the other employments of a most laborious diocese, he has himself stated in his Preface to the Lectures; and they are such as could not fail to make a deep impression on a mind like his. The gloomy aspect of the times; the alarming and perilous situation of this country; the astonishing success, which every where attended its enemies abroad; the indefatigable industry of other enemies, still more formidable, at *home*, in diffusing disloyalty and

infidelity

infidelity and wickedness amongst the lower orders of the people; the unabated dissipation of the upper ranks; their extreme prodigality, luxury and voluptuousness; the marked indifference, which was every day more visible in their conduct, to all moral and religious obligations; a train of circumstances such as these called loudly, he thought, on the serious and reflecting part of the community, to make some vigorous struggle, and to stand boldly forward in the maintenance of good order and of public morals. He felt too, that these were exertions in a peculiar manner incumbent on the clergy, and *that* not only on the parochial minister, but on those, in a still higher degree, who filled the more exalted stations in the church, and to whom therefore attached a weightier responsibility.

Influenced by these reasons, he resolved on discharging *his* share at least of such a solemn and imperious duty. He considered that "it would be no unbecoming conclusion of his life, if the labours of his declining years should tend in any respect to render the Holy Scriptures more clear and intelligible, more useful and delightful; if they should confirm the faith, reform the manners, console and revive the hearts, of those who heard him; and vindicate the honour of our Divine Master from those gross indignities and insults which had been so indecently thrown on Him, and his religion." In addition to these leading objects, he was at the same time not without the hope that "it might be the means of drawing," as he well observes, "a little more attention to that holy, but too much neglected season,

which

which our Church has very wisely set apart for the purpose of retirement and recollection, and of giving some little pause and respite to the ceaseless occupations and amusements of a busy and a thoughtless world." With these views he commenced his Lectures on the 23d of February 1798, and never surely was any undertaking more successfully pursued, or more evidently favoured by the divine blessing. The eagerness to attend them was beyond all example. The church, long before the service begun, was crowded to excess; and the congregations consisted not only of the higher orders, or of persons attached exclusively to the Church of England, but of people in every rank and station of life, and almost of every possible religious persuasion. There seemed, in short, to be but one motive, one principle in all—an

anxious desire to hear the great truths of Christianity enforced by a prelate, who stood high in the public estimation for his powers of oratory and his enlarged and liberal views, and higher still, as exemplifying in his constant practice the true character of a Christian Bishop.

I know indeed it has been said, but most unjustly and disingenuously, with a view of detracting from their merit, and the effect which they produced, that it was the *fashion* to attend his Lectures. To this my first answer is, that if a mere compliance with *fashion* had been the ruling motive, it would not have continued without intermission for four years together. The solicitude of persons, actuated by no higher impulse, would, instead of increasing, have diminished; whereas, on the contrary, it is an undisputed fact, that the church was every

successive

successive year more numerously attended, and the public desire to hear him carried, if possible, to a still higher pitch. But a second, and a better answer is to be found in the Lectures themselves; which, apart from the earnest, devout, animated, and dignified manner in which they were delivered, and by which he gave such peculiar force and interest to all his discourses, exhibit such a luminous interpretation of Scripture; such a clear and ample refutation of the most specious objections against particular parts of it; such a convincing statement, wherever the subject offered itself, of the evidences on which it rests; such an unqualified avowal of its fundamental doctrines; such a powerful enforcement of its moral duties; such a felicity in applying the characters and incidents which it records, to the heart

and conscience; in a word, such an awakening view of the vast importance of religion, and such fervid exhortations to all ranks of men to feel, to study, and to practise it, as could not fail deeply to affect and edify the persons he addressed. He had himself, as he expressly says, "the satisfaction of being assured, that several, even of those amongst his audience, who disbelieved or doubted the truth of Christianity, were impressed with a more favourable opinion both of its evidences and its doctrines, and with a higher veneration for the Sacred Writings than they had before entertained;" and indeed, I am most fully persuaded that these Lectures were, under God, eminently useful, at that critical juncture, in checking the wild career of Infidel opinion, and exciting a habit of closer inquiry into the grounds

of

of Revelation; that they were the means of reforming and reclaiming many who had been seduced into error; and that generally throughout the Metropolis they produced at the time an evident change in the tone of public morals. They have now been some years in print, and have passed through several editions; and they are, I believe, universally acknowledged, by the deliberate judgment of all candid men, to be in every sense worthy of the Bishop's reputation, and to have rendered essential service to the cause of virtue and religion.

It was not however merely by his exertions in the pulpit that he laboured to promote those great objects. He had long observed with regret a growing disregard for the sanctity and solemnity of the Lord's Day, and had addressed to his Clergy the very excellent Letter on that

that subject, which the reader will find amongst his Tracts. This was attended unquestionably by some benefit: but still he thought it highly expedient that, at such a time, and in a matter of such moment, some more vigorous measures should be adopted; and, accordingly, at a meeting of *the Society for enforcing His Majesty's Proclamation*, it was proposed, as the mode likely to be most effectual, that the higher ranks of society should be invited to bind themselves by a voluntary resolution to observe the Sabbath more strictly and religiously, and that, as an example to the lower orders, the resolution should be made public. With this view, the following Declaration was then drawn up and adopted:

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being deeply sensible of the great importance of the religious observance

servance of the Lord's Day to the interests of Christianity and of civil society, do declare that we hold it highly improper on that day to give or accept invitations to entertainments or assemblies, or (except in cases of urgency, or for purposes of charity) to travel, or to exercise any worldly occupations, or to employ our domestics or dependents in any thing interfering with their public or private religious duties. And as example, and a public declaration of the principles of our own conduct, more peculiarly at this time, may tend to influence the conduct of others, we do hereby further declare our resolution to adhere (as far as may be practicable) to the due observance of the Lord's Day, according to the preceding Declaration."

It might naturally have been expected that a measure of this temperate and judicious

judicious description, in which enthusiasm had no share; in which there was not the most distant intention of promoting melancholy or austerity, or of excluding from the Sabbath any innocent relaxation compatible with the sacred purposes of its institution; would have met with general approbation, and received the cordial support of all candid and reflecting men. Many of this character did in fact approve and sign it; but, as it always happens when more than ordinary efforts are made on the side of Religion, an outcry was immediately raised by the trifling and licentious; and the most shameful misrepresentations of the objects of the Society were industriously and widely circulated. Amongst other things, it was confidently affirmed in the newspapers of the day, that the Declaration was only a preparatory step to the introduction

introduction of a Bill into Parliament in order to take away from the common people all the usual comforts of the Sunday; to prevent them from seeing a single friend, or from taking their evening walk; to confine them rigidly in their own habitations, and to oblige them to spend the day in fasting and in prayer. In all this there was not, and could not be, a particle of truth; yet this, and other gross perversions of a most laudable design, but too well answered their purpose, by exciting groundless alarms and prejudices in a part of the community, who would otherwise, it is probable, have had no scruple in supporting a measure, the real and the only object of which was a more rational and a more religious observance of the Christian Sabbath. Upon this point, the Bishop makes the following just observation: "That men," he says,

"who

"who wish to see not only the Lord's Day, but the Christian Religion, extinguished in this country, should raise such an outcry against a measure calculated to preserve both, is no wonder: but that men of sense, of piety, and of virtue, should adopt the same language, and join in the profane and senseless uproar, is perfectly astonishing."

Early in 1800, his long and memorable contest with a Clergyman in his diocese was brought to a favourable conclusion, by the latter suffering judgment to go by default, and the consequent forfeiture to the Crown of a valuable living in Essex. The question thus terminated was of great importance to the Church of England; as it was the means of putting an effectual stop to a species of Simony at that time gaining ground; namely, purchasing

purchasing the advowson of a living, and then taking a lease of the tithes, glebe, house, &c. for ninety-nine years, at a pepper-corn rent, and entering into immediate possession of the premises, and all the profits, just as if there had been an immediate resignation. It is evident that a practice such as this was subversive of the proper exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, by virtually taking from the Ordinary the power, which by law he has, of rejecting the proffered resignation of a benefice under a suspicion of Simony. The Bishop therefore had long determined, whenever the living in question should become vacant by the demise of the incumbent, to refuse institution on the above-mentioned ground; and when the time arrived, he adhered inflexibly to his purpose, and tried the question. In doing this, he was well

aware

aware that he was bringing upon himself much trouble, and no slight expense; but such considerations had no weight upon his mind; nor was he tempted by any solicitations, though very strong ones were made, to change his resolution. Amongst others, he received a formal application from the Lord Lieutenant, and nearly the whole Magistracy of the county of Essex; but though he concurred with them in giving full credit to the gentleman, in whose favour they had interested themselves, for his agricultural exertions, and his great activity as a county magistrate, he yet declared unequivocally in his answer, that he could not on that account connive at a simoniacal contract; a contract, of which he had in his possession the clearest proof; which he considered as pregnant with the worst consequences to the Established Church;

Church; and which therefore he felt himself called upon, in his episcopal character, firmly to resist.

The same paramount principle of public duty had induced him some time before to withhold his assent to an appointment by the East-India Company to a chaplaincy in Bengal. As the transaction alluded to was in its consequences of great importance, and was so considered by the Bishop, I shall give the account of it in his own words.

"The Charter of the East-India Company requires, that the Chaplains whom they shall appoint, shall be approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Bishop of London. The Clergyman therefore elected on this occasion applied to me for my approbation: but as I had been informed, upon unquestionable authority, that he was a very improper

 person

person for the situation, I peremptorily refused to confirm the appointment. This produced much clamour, violence and obloquy from him and his friends; and amongst other things I was threatened with a *Mandamus* from the Court of King's Bench. But I stood my ground, and carried my point. I was also strongly urged and called upon to assign my reasons for the opposition I had made to him; but I refused to give any, except that *I thought him an unfit person for the place*; conceiving the power given me by the charter to be perfectly discretional. By this resistance, and the final, though reluctant, acquiescence of the East-India Company, the right of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London to refuse their assent, without assigning a reason, is fully established; and it is on this account that I leave the transaction

on

on record, for the information of my successors in the See of London; it being a matter of the utmost importance to the interests of religion in our East-India settlements." To this I am enabled to add, that since this opposition, which marks in a strong point of view the Bishop's firmness of mind, in a matter which nothing but spirit and energy could have accomplished, the Company have been much more careful in recommending clergymen of approved principles and morals, than they had formerly been. Some of the Directors in particular have paid, much to their honour, peculiar attention to this subject; and there can indeed be no question, that it is of the utmost moment, in a country like India, where there is no general ecclesiastical establishment, that the services of the Church should

at least be performed by men deeply impressed with the dignity of their sacred function, and able and zealous in the discharge of its duties.

In April 1800, Lord Auckland presented a Bill to the House of Lords, the object of which was to render it unlawful for persons divorced for adultery to intermarry with each other. This unhappily failed; and it was matter of very sincere regret to the Bishop, that a measure, as he conceived, imperiously called for by the increasing profligacy of the times, recommended by every motive of expediency, and sanctioned by the most express declarations of Scripture, should not have been permitted to pass into a law*. During its progress

* The absolute necessity of some legislative measure to check the progress of adulterous intercourse, cannot

progress in the Upper House, he spoke strongly in its favour; and he took occasion to express the same sentiments, when an unsuccessful attempt was afterwards made by the present Marquis of Buckingham, to introduce a clause into a private Divorce Bill, with a view of prohibiting the intermarriage of the guilty

cannot be more strikingly exemplified than by a declaration made by Lord Auckland, that from the Reformation to the beginning of the present century, he could only find four instances of parliamentary divorces: but that in the present reign they had then increased to the enormous number of 198. If, however, any further proof were wanting, it would be the still more alarming growth of adultery within the last few years, and above all, the cool, deliberate, unblushing indifference with which it is committed. In a *recent* instance, more particularly, it seems to have been reduced into a system, and to have set at open defiance all decency and all law. Surely those, in whose hands the government of this country is placed, are bound, as they value the Divine blessing, to provide without delay some effectual barrier against the further spread of so much shameless iniquity.

guilty parties. His speech, on this last occasion. was as follows:

"After the very able manner in which the clause proposed has been now supported, I certainly do not mean to take up much of your Lordships time, in prolonging the discussion of it. But, on a question of such importance, in which the interests of morality and religion are so essentially concerned, it is impossible for me, in the situation which I have the honour to hold in the church, to give a silent vote. I therefore rise merely for the purpose of declaring publicly my entire concurrence in the clause proposed by the noble Marquis. I have on former occasions fully explained my sentiments on this subject, and every thing I have heard in the course of this day's debate confirms me in those sentiments. The clause, though it will

certainly

certainly not go to the root of the evil; yet will surely be some check to adultery, at least on the part of the female. It will take away the encouragement at present given to that detestable crime, by the prospect of a future marriage of the adulteress with her seducer; which is in fact offering a reward to vice, and holding out a premium to adultery. This premium operates most forcibly on the female mind, and tends to destroy that connexion, which God and nature have established between guilt and disgrace; a constitution of things, much wiser, I apprehend, and much more conducive to the general welfare of mankind, than that very liberal system of modern ethics, which inculcates so much pity and tenderness and indulgence to crimes of the very worst complexion. I am aware, my Lords, that this clause is only

a partial remedy. It does not go to the punishment of the seducer, who is, I confess, generally the most culpable of the two guilty parties. But this may be brought forward on some future occasion. In the mean time, let us do something; let us do what we can. To crush an evil of such magnitude, we must go on gradually, and proceed step by step. The hydra of adultery cannot be subdued all at once: but we may cut off the many heads of the monster one by one, till at last it may become a lifeless trunk.

"My Lords, I shall only detain your Lordships a few moments more, just to notice an argument, which has been very much relied upon by the Noble Lords, who object to the clause in question, and which appears to me wholly gratuitous and unfounded. They have always taken it for granted, and assumed it as a kind of

of *postulatum*, that if the adulteress be not permitted to marry her seducer, she is necessarily and of course driven into prostitution for life. Now this I hold to be an assumption which cannot be maintained. Is there no alternative, no middle and better course between marriage with the seducer and a life of prostitution? Is it not possible, that the adulteress may be struck with horror, with contrition and remorse for her crime? May she not even wish to seclude herself for a time from the world; to withdraw herself from the observation of mankind, and endeavour to recover in the privacy of retirement those virtuous habits which she has unfortunately lost? Instances of this sort are undoubtedly to be found, especially amongst those, who have been educated in principles of virtue and religion, but in some unguarded hour have,

have, by the vile arts of an abandoned man, being betrayed into guilt. This, my Lords, has, I know, sometimes happened; and sure I am, that this temporary seclusion gives a woman an infinitely better chance for recovery, than a marriage with her seducer. For, can your Lordships suppose, that the conversation and society of a man, who has shewn himself destitute of every principle of honour and virtue; who has been guilty of so foul and base a crime, as to corrupt the wife, of perhaps his dearest friend, and plunge the very object of his affection into a gulph of sin and misery; can your Lordships, I say, suppose, that the society of such a man can possibly be the means of restoring to her that purity of mind which he has himself destroyed; or that *his* house should be the proper school for repent-

ance

ance and for reformation? No, my Lords, the true, the only way to bring the unhappy victim back into the path of virtue, is to separate her from the arms of her vile betrayer; to lead her into retirement; to place her under the protection of a few kind relatives or friends, and thus give her an opportunity of making her peace with her offended Maker; and, by the discreetness and circumspection of her future conduct, of recovering in some degree her former character, and re-establishing herself in the good opinion of the world."

It was during the debate on this subject in the House of Lords, that Lord Clare, at that time Lord Chancellor of Ireland, publicly declared in parliament, that, in his opinion, marriage was a mere civil contract, and that where that contract was declared void by a competent jurisdiction,

jurisdiction, the parties were at liberty to marry again. "Now this position," says the Bishop, "I hold to be a false and dangerous doctrine. Marriage is indeed a civil contract; but then it is also something more. It is a divine ordinance. It is so pronounced to be by our Saviour. It is also declared so to be in our Marriage Ceremony. Now the Christian religion is incorporated into our Constitution, and made a part of the law of the land; and the Liturgy besides is formally established by Act of Parliament. It follows therefore that matrimony is considered by the law of England as a divine institution. Indeed, if it were not so, why should adultery be considered as so very heinous a crime? What would the breach of marriage be as a mere civil contract, but a mere civil offence?"

To

To this I may add, that Lord Loughborough, then Lord Chancellor, at the Bishop's earnest and particular request, took occasion to give a direct contradiction to Lord Clare's assertion, by declaring it to be his fixed opinion, that "marriage was not only a civil institution, but also a divine ordinance, and that it was uniformly so considered by the laws of England."

The year 1800 closed by a singular concurrence of circumstances:—the commencement on the same day of a new year, a new century, and the Union of Ireland with Great Britain. Such a combination of events would naturally make a strong impression on a thinking and religious mind, and it evidently made a very strong one on the Bishop. "The present," he says, in a passage written

written with his thoughts full of the subject, and elevated by the warmest patriotic feelings, "the present is a memorable æra in the annals of this kingdom. God grant it may be a happy one! Auspicium melioris ævi! replete with the choicest blessings of Heaven upon this land, and bringing back to us once more that Divine assistance and protection, which have lately been withdrawn from us, and without which all the efforts of human wisdom and power, as we have found by sad experience, can avail us nothing!"

"To me," he adds, "a gracious Providence has marked the close of this century by many propitious circumstances; more particularly by favouring me with success in a contest of great importance with a clergyman of my diocese, in which the interests of Religion

and

and the Church of England were materially involved. Would to God! the century had closed in a manner equally favourable to this country. But, alas! it has been the reverse. The last year has entirely blotted out all the glorious events and fair prospects of the preceding one, and left us in a more perilous situation than we were ever placed in before! In truth, the sudden, frequent, and astonishing vicissitudes of this war have no parallel in history, and are plainly out of the ordinary course of human affairs. They bear the most evident marks of an Almighty overruling hand; and, sure I am, that nothing but the interposition of the same irresistible Power in our behalf, can rescue us from ruin."

Such were the sentiments of this great Prelate more than ten years ago, on the state

state of this country. How much greater reason have we at the present day, and amidst the present awful and tumultuous scene of things, to stand amazed at the mysterious ways of Providence, and to send up our devoutest prayers to the Supreme Disposer of all human events, not to forsake us in this hour of peril! Unless *He* protect us, we must sink inevitably beneath the dangers which surround us: and yet who must not tremble at the thought, how very little we deserve to be protected!

In the Autumn of 1801, a very interesting scene took place, which, though strictly of a private nature, I cannot forbear from mentioning. It is thus related by the Bishop. "Yesterday, the 6th of August, I passed a very pleasant day at Shrewsbury House, near Shooter's Hill, the residence of the Princess Charlotte of

Wales.

Wales. The day was fine; and the prospect extensive and beautiful, taking in a large reach of the Thames, which was covered with vessels of various sizes and descriptions. We saw a good deal of the young Princess. She is a most captivating and engaging child, and, considering the high station she may hereafter fill, a most interesting and important one. She repeated to me several of her hymns with great correctness and propriety; and on being told, that, when she went to South-End in Essex, as she afterwards did for the benefit of sea-bathing, she would then be in my Diocese, she fell down on her knees and begged by blessing. I gave it her with all my heart, and with my earnest secret prayers to God, that she might adorn her illustrious station with every Christian grace; and that, if ever

she became the Queen of this truly great and glorious country, she might be the means of diffusing virtue, piety, and happiness through every part of her dominions!"

Soon after this incident occurred, the Bishop went, as usual to his little cottage at Sundridge. It has been already stated, that on his accession to the See of London, he was obliged very reluctantly to relinquish Hunton. From that time he lived principally during the summer at Fulham Palace, which, by the successive improvements it had undergone, and particularly by some very judicious alterations of his own, adding much both to its beauty and convenience, was in all respects a truly venerable and most desirable residence. So indeed he always considered it: but still, from its proximity to the Metropolis, and its being

close

close to a poor and populous village, it had not that tranquillity and retirement about it, which he so much coveted: and therefore, soon after entering upon his new bishoprick, he determined to obtain some small habitation in his favourite county of Kent, where he might spend a month or two every Autumn; and one of that description being vacant at Sundridge, he immediately secured the lease of it. The situation was a most delightful one, about the middle of the beautiful valley, which runs between Westerham and Sevenoaks, in a country remarkable for its rich, picturesque and varied scenery, abounding in the best society, and possessing, in short, all the attractions which could recommend it to his choice. Here then he always passed a part of the year in a manner most agreeable to his wishes; enjoying that

rural quiet, which carried to his mind so many charms; mixing cheerfully and frequently with the excellent neighbourhood by which he was surrounded; inquiring into and relieving the wants of the poor people who needed his assistance, and benefiting them in every way by his care, his counsel, his instruction and his example. Amongst other instances of attention to them, he contributed liberally, at the time I am speaking of, towards repairing and embellishing their parochial church*; and I shall soon have occasion to record an act of still greater munificence,

* The chancel was at the same time much improved at the expense of the present worthy Rector of Sundridge, Dr. Vyse; and Lord Frederick Campbell, who resides at a most beautiful place in the parish, called Coomb Bank, and of whose benevolence on all occasions, where it can be usefully exerted, it is impossible to speak too highly, undertook to make an excellent road to the church, instead of a very narrow and bad one, which before led to it from the village.

munificence, which, if any thing could have added to the respect and veneration in which he was before held, will immortalize his name as the benefactor of that parish.

In the months of April and May in the following year 1802, he undertook for the fourth time the visitation of his Diocese. This at his advanced age was an arduous and laborious undertaking; more particularly, as from its increasing population he thought it necessary to extend his confirmations to the more distant parts of the county of Essex, where they had never been held before. On this occasion I had the honour of attending him, as his chaplain; and I can never forget the admirable and striking manner in which he executed all the duties of his high station; the attention, the respect, the kindness which he shewed to his

Clergy; the anxiety he displayed to rectify all that was wrong, to encourage all that was good; the dignified solemnity, with which he performed the rite of Confirmation, and the deep impression, which was uniformly made by his animated, simple, and affectionate address to the congregation, when that service was concluded. This address, I doubt not, is still fixed, in substance at least, on the recollection of thousands: but as a correct copy of it has never been before the public, and as those, who heard it, cannot but feel an interest in reading, what so much touched and affected them at the time of its delivery, I shall here insert it at length.

"The office of Confirmation is now over: but before you leave this place, I have a few words to say to you, to which I desire you will all pay the most serious

attention.

attention. Remember, I beseech you, every one of you, as long as you live, what has passed here this day. Think not that it is a mere formal, unmeaning ceremony, which extends not beyond the moment; which may be forgotten as soon as it is over, and which can have no influence on your future condition either here or hereafter. On the contrary, it is one of the most awful, one of the most important, and, if it is not your own fault, one of the most useful acts of your whole lives. It is a solemn dedication of yourselves in this sacred place to God and to religion. It is a voluntary oblation of yourselves, your souls and bodies, at your first entrance into the world, at the first commencement of your rational life, to the service of your Maker and Redeemer. You have, in short, chosen this day whom you will serve; you have

chosen Christ for your Lord and Master; you have, in the presence of God and of this congregation, professed yourselves his disciples; you have vowed fidelity and allegiance to him; you have promised to believe his doctrines and to obey his laws.

"Take care then, every one of you, that you punctually fulfil these sacred engagements; and be assured, that, upon your doing so, depend the whole comfort and happiness of your future lives, both in this world and the next. And that you may be enabled to do all this, you must frequently and fervently apply for the assistance of God's Holy Spirit; you must never let the morning rise nor the evening close upon you, without addressing God in private prayer; you must be constant in your attendance on the public service of the Church, on the Lord's

Day,

Day, both morning and afternoon; you must remember that God claims that day as *his own*, and that he has stamped upon it a peculiar mark of sanctity, which you must never dare to violate by following your ordinary amusements, or ordinary occupations on that day, or by any act of levity, dissipation, profaneness and immorality.

"And you must not only attend to the general duties of the Church, but must prepare yourselves as soon as possible, for that most solemn rite of our religion, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; that supper which Christ himself did almost with his dying breath command you to receive in remembrance of him. Above all things, let this consideration sink deep into your hearts, and be for ever present to your thoughts; that this world is not the *only* one you have to live in; but

that

that after death you will pass into another, where you will be judged for every thing that you have thought, said, or done in this; and according as you are found innocent or guilty, by your Almighty Judge, you will, through the merits of your Redeemer, be rewarded with everlasting happiness, or, on the contrary, be doomed to never-ceasing misery.

"Eternity, in short, with all its awful train of consequences, is now before you, and whether it shall be a happy or a miserable one, will in a great degree depend on the course you now take at your first setting out in the world; for the habits you now form will determine your future character and conduct: the steps you now take will probably decide your doom for ever. Be resolved then [illegible] and remember your Creator in the

the days of your youth. If you do, you may depend upon it, that your Creator will not forget you all the days of your life. He will look down upon you with an eye of uncommon favour and approbation. He will bless and prosper you in all your honest designs and undertakings; will conduct you through the dangers, the difficulties, the distresses of this mortal scene, to a state of endless felicity hereafter; and in the meanwhile, like your blessed Master in the same period of life, you will be growing in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour both with God and man.

"You may now depart to your respective homes, and may the blessing of God for ever rest upon you!"

The Charge, which he delivered on this last visitation, was inferior in spirit, energy and usefulness, to none of the former.

former. It embraced a variety of the most important topics; and, in particular, the necessity of redoubled zeal, on the part of the clergy, not only to counteract the pernicious tendency of that multitude of foreign infidel publications, which, during the short interval of peace, had found their way into this country; but also to check in the most effectual way, the growth of fanaticism, and of separation from the Church. The way which he recommended to them, as best according with the true spirit and genius of Christianity, was—not violence and animosity, not bitterness and persecution—but a faithful, fervent, conscientious discharge of every part of their ministerial duty; and it is assuredly the *only* way by which we can ever hope to prevail against that sectarian zeal, which strengthens with our weakness,

and

ınd triumphs by our inactivity. I hesi-
ate not to quote the following passage,
ɔecause it speaks the language of wisdom,
ınd cannot be too widely diffused through
ɔvery part of the kingdom. "It is,"
ays the Bishop, "a fact, which admits
ɔf little doubt, that when the itinerant
ɔreacher, goes forth upon his mission,
ıe commonly looks out for those parishes,
vhere either the shepherd has entirely
leserted his flock, and is employing or
ımusing himself elsewhere, or where he
ınfortunately pays so little attention to
t, is so indolent, so lukewarm, so indiffe-
ent to its welfare, as to make it an easy
ɔrey to every bold invader. There that
nvader finds an easy access and a wel-
come reception, and soon collects to-
gether a large number of proselytes.
But, in general, he very prudently keeps
aloof from those parishes, where he sees
a resident

a resident minister conducting himself in the manner I have above described; watching over his people with unremitted care; grounding them early in the rudiments of sound religion; guarding them carefully against the false glosses and dangerous delusions of illiterate and unauthorized teachers; bringing them to a constant attendance on divine worship in their parish churches; and manifesting the same zeal, activity, and earnestness to retain his people in the Church of England, which he sees others exert to seduce them from it. Into parishes so constituted, the self-commissioned preacher seldom, if ever, enters; or, if he does, he rarely gains any permanent footing, any settled establishment in them. He is in most cases forced to give way to the superior weight and influence of a regular, a learned, an exemplary, and a

diligent

diligent pastor. This then is the true, the most effectual way, of counteracting the progress of schism and fanaticism. There are numbers, I am persuaded, here present, who can, from their own experience, and their own laudable exertions, bear testimony to the truth of this position; and whenever this remedy is *universally* applied, (as I hope and trust it gradually will) I do not hesitate to predict that the evil complained of will be considerably lessened, in some instances entirely subdued.

"Indeed, it would, I think, be degrading to the honour and dignity of our antient and venerable Establishment, to suppose, that a Church founded on the Gospel of Christ; cemented with the blood of its martyrs; constructed by some of the wisest, most learned, most pious, most eminent men of that or almost

almost any other period; a Church, which has stood the test of ages, and the shock of persecution; which is the great bulwark of Protestantism in Europe, the admiration of foreign nations, and the glory of our own; it would, I say, be paying but an ill compliment to such an Establishment to suppose, that a Church so constituted, and at the same time supported and protected by the State, can be shaken, or in any material degree injured, by the invectives or misrepresentations of *any* adversaries that we have to contend with. No, my Brethren, let us think better of ourselves; let us be true to ourselves; let us make the best use of the vast advantages we possess; let us exert ourselves in our several stations with diligence, with vigour, with energy and with perseverance, and we have nothing to fear."

In

In addition to these admirable observations, which I would to God were universally felt and followed, he exhorted his clergy to encourage amongst their people, peculiarly at such a time, a spirit of loyalty, obedience and subordination; and, with that view, recommended to them in the strongest terms the adoption in their respective parishes of those excellent institutions, Sunday Schools; or, if these should be disapproved, or thought impracticable, the propriety at least *in some way or other* of educating the lower classes of the people, and instructing them in the principles of the Christian Faith. The conclusion of this Charge, the *last* he ever delivered, is very affecting. "I have now stated to you," he says, "what appeared to me most worthy of your attention, and most necessary at the present moment. And as, at my advanced

 period

period of life, I dare scarcely indulge the hope of being permitted to meet you again in this place, I was anxious to take this opportunity of collecting into one view, and pressing upon your most serious consideration, every thing that presented itself to my mind, as most conducive to your real credit and welfare, to the best interests of the Church of England, and to the general diffusion of sound morality and genuine piety and religion throughout the great mass of the people of this land. What I have here offered to your thoughts, I do in my best judgment, after the most mature consideration and the experience of a long life, most conscientiously believe to be well calculated for those important purposes; and I entreat you to receive it as the advice of one, who can now have no other possible view in this world but that of discharging the various duties

incumbent

incumbent on him (more especially those which he owes to you) to the best of those abilities, which God has given him. And it will be my last and most fervent prayer to Heaven, that both you and I may be well prepared for that most awful account, which we must all of us give, of the sacred and important trust reposed in us, at the tribunal of our Almighty Judge."

On the subject of Residence, in this Charge, the Bishop stated that the consideration of the question was then before the Legislature. The fact was, that under the Statute of the 21st of Henry the Eighth, many vexatious prosecutions had been instituted by common informers, for the mere sake of the penalties, against non-resident clergy; in consequence of which, many excellent men had been subjected to great hardships.

It was therefore extremely desirable, that such persons should be relieved from the pressure of this Act. Accordingly with this view a short Bill was in the first instance introduced, to suspend all actions on the Statute of Henry till the 25th of March 1802; and during the interval another Bill was brought forward by Sir William Scott, the outline of which, as stated by himself in a speech of great learning, ability and eloquence, was shortly this: first, *on the matter of farming*—for on that point also the Act of Henry was extremely rigorous and severe—to give the clergy the liberty of farming in cases where they had been injuriously prohibited; and, secondly, *in the matter of residence*—to give a fair and reasonable allowance of time to the clergyman for the occasions of private life, free from the vexatious suits of an informer,

informer, though still subject to the superintendence of his proper superior: to allow an exemption from all penalties for clergymen bearing certain offices, during the times required for the duties of those offices: to restore the power of bishops to grant licences for absence in certain enumerated and expressed cases; and in other cases, which cannot be specifically foreseen or provided for, to allow the concurrence and consent of the metropolitan to have that effect. This Bill, which, before it was introduced, had been long in contemplation, was afterwards warmly debated in Parliament, and every point of it maturely weighed and thoroughly discussed. Many of its clauses were very strongly opposed; and, amongst others, the Bishop was himself of opinion, that the exemptions were too numerous, so as considerably

incumbents became less capable of supporting themselves with that decency and respectability, which, especially in a large commercial city, their stations required. But, in a peculiar degree in the present times, when from various causes the price of all the necessaries of life has been so enormously advanced, the inadequacy of such a maintenance was felt with such severity, as to render it absolutely necessary to call in the aid of the Legislature: and it was therefore the object of the Bill then proposed by the Bishop, to improve, on the authority of Parliament, all the livings under the Act of Charles, by an increased rate upon property. This, however, though called for equally by justice and necessity, was strongly opposed; chiefly on the ground, that there was no consent of the parties affected

affected by it, namely, the inhabitants of the several parishes where the augmentation was to be made; and that without that consent it would be an unreasonable and unjust invasion of private property. But it was answered, and amongst others, with great impression, by the Bishop, that the Bill had then been eighteen months in agitation, during which period no petition against it of any kind had been received from any one of the parishes; a circumstance, he observed, which ought surely to be considered as an acquiescence on their part, implied though not expressed, and, as in fact it was, a tacit consent to the measure. This reasoning was considered sufficient, and the Bill passed without further opposition. "Thus," he says, "after a long delay, and difficulties of various kinds, was a most important measure

brought

brought to an issue; the London Clergy were highly gratified by it, and expressed themselves much obliged by the exertions I had made. It was indeed an object, in which I felt most deeply interested, and its success has given me heartfelt satisfaction: for it has not only procured a considerable addition of income to fifty of the London Incumbents, but has also, I hope, *in its principle*, laid a foundation for a *future* augmentation of their benefices, whenever particular emergencies may render it necessary; and from what fell from several Noble Lords in the course of the debate, I cannot help flattering myself, that it may ultimately lead the way to a reasonable increase of all the poorer livings throughout England and Wales."

In the winter of the following year, 1805, the Bishop, with that unceasing attention

attention which he paid, in every thing, to the great concerns of religion, took considerable pains to suppress a custom, which he justly considered, in common with many others, as a most glaring violation of public decency, and which was evidently gaining ground in the fashionable world; namely, that of Sunday Concerts at private houses by professional performers, at which large numbers were assembled, and much disturbance created on the evening of that sacred day. This was a profanation, which, in his high responsible station, as Diocesan of the Metropolis, it was his duty, if possible, to prevent; and accordingly with this view he separately addressed the following letter to three Ladies of high rank in society, who, by opening their houses for these musical exhibitions, had contributed principally to their introduction.

"Although

or in our private meditations and devotions; and it mingles too much of the gaieties and the pleasures of this world with those serious thoughts of another, which this day was peculiarly intended to excite and to cherish in our hearts.

"Allow me also to add, Madam, that the laws of this kingdom expressly prohibit *all public diversions* on the Lord's Day, and I entreat your Ladyship to consider, whether the Sunday evening concerts do not in every respect resemble a *public diversion*, except that they are given in a private house, instead of a Theatre, or an Opera House. This does not escape the observation of the lower orders of the people, who, when they see the crowded doors and splendid assemblies of the wealthy and the great on the Lord's Day, are apt to express (as

I happen

able pause, a relief from the incessant toil of diversion and of pleasure.

"But let me not, Madam, be misunderstood. I am no friend to a pharisaical or puritanical observance of the Lord's Day. I do not contend, that it should be either to the poor, or to the rich, or to any other human being whatever, a day of gloom and melancholy, a day of superstitious rigour, a day of absolute exclusion from all society. No, it is on the contrary a festival, a joyful festival, to which we ought always to look forward with delight, and enjoy with a thankful and a grateful heart. It is only to those amusements, which partake of the nature and complexion of *public diversions*, on the Lord's Day, that I object; to large assemblies, for instance, and large concerts consisting of hired performers, where numerous parties are collected together.

together, occasioning a great concourse of servants in one place, employing them at a time when they have a right to ease and rest, and producing much of that noise and tumult in the public streets, which are so opposite to the peaceful tranquillity that should prevail on that day—a day which the Almighty himself has distinguished with a peculiar mark of sanctity, and which he claims *as his own.* It is against these open infractions of the Lord's Day, that I think it my duty to remonstrate. But in hearing sacred music on the Sunday evening, confined to a small domestic circle of relations and friends, without any hired performers, I am so far from seeing any impropriety, that it appears to me a relaxation well suited to the nature of a Christian Sabbath, perfectly congenial to the spirit of our religion, and calculated

lated to raise our minds to heavenly thoughts, and sublime and holy contemplations.

"Your Ladyship will, I hope, do me the justice to believe, that, in addressing these lines to you, I meant not to intrude myself needlessly on your notice, much less to give you the slightest offence; but merely to discharge a very important duty resulting from that most responsible situation, in which it has pleased God to place me. And I cannot help flattering myself, that when your Ladyship reflects a little on the arguments I have offered to your consideration, you will see reason to relinquish (and even recommend it to your friends to relinquish) a practice, which you probably took up from mere want of attention to the subject, and from not being aware of the mischievous consequences resulting from it.

"Should you come to this determination, I have no hesitation in saying, that you will add greatly to that respect, which is so justly due to your high rank and station; you will do a most essential service to the holy religion we profess; and you will store up a reflection in your own mind, which will afford you the most substantial comfort and support, at a moment, when all the splendour and gaiety of the world will fade before your eyes and vanish into nothing."

Upon this admirable letter it would be superfluous to make a single comment. So much rational, yet fervent piety; so much earnestness in the cause of virtue; so much anxiety to promote the best interests of man, could hardly plead in vain; and it did not. He received assurances, that the practice, of which he complained, should, if not immediately,

diately, at all events the following year, be discontinued: and I feel persuaded that a promise thus solemnly made and hitherto observed, will not be forgotten. "Though dead, he yet speaketh:" and it is in the hope, that the sentiments he expressed on this occasion, may still operate as a powerful check on the licentiousness of public manners, and be the means of fixing, on the minds of many, serious and religious impressions, that I have thought it my duty to leave his letter on record.

In the interesting and important discussions, which took place in Parliament in 1805, on the great question of Catholic Emancipation, when it was rejected by a large majority, he abstained from any public expression of his sentiments; but, though he contented himself with giving

only a silent vote, he gave it, as the following statement in his own words will shew, after much deliberation, and with a perfect conviction of its being a right one. "If," he observes, "the Petition from the Catholics of Ireland had been for a more complete toleration in matters of religion, though it can hardly, I think, be more complete than it is, there was not an individual in the House that would have given a more hearty and cordial assent to the prayer of the petition than myself. I am and ever have been a decided friend to liberty of conscience, and a full and free toleration of all who differ in religious opinions from the Established Church. It is a sentiment perfectly consonant with the spirit of the Gospel, the principles of the Church of England, and every dictate of justice and humanity. It is a sentiment deeply engraven on my

heart,

heart, by which I have ever regulated, and hope I ever shall regulate my conduct. But this was not an application for liberty of conscience, and freedom of religious opinion and religious worship. The truth is, it is an application for political power; and that power I, for one, am not disposed to grant them: because, I believe that it would be difficult to produce a single instance, where they have possessed *political power in a Protestant country*, without using it cruelly and tyrannically. And this indeed follows necessarily from the very doctrines of their church, several of which are well known to be hostile not only to the Protestant Religion, but to a Protestant Government. It has been said, indeed, that these are not *now* the tenets of the Church of Rome; that they may be found perhaps 'in some old musty records,' but that they are now

grown

grown obsolete and invalid, and are held in utter detestation by the whole body of Roman Catholics both in England and Ireland. But those 'musty records,' in which these doctrines appear, are nothing less than the decrees of general councils confirmed by the pope; and Dr. Troy, Titular Archbishop of Dublin, in his pastoral instructions to the Roman Catholics of his diocese, published in 1798, tells his flock that 'they must adhere implicitly to decrees and canons of the church assembled in general councils and confirmed by the pope;' and the celebrated lay Roman Catholic writer, Mr. Plowden, in his 'Case stated,' published in 1791, maintains the same doctrine, and the infallibity of general councils. These therefore are unquestionably at this day the tenets of their church; they have never been renounced or disavowed;

avowed; and, till they are so disavowed by authority, every good Catholic is bound to obey them.

"It is true, that they have been renounced by the Petitioners from Ireland: but they can renounce them only for themselves; they cannot renounce them for the whole body of Catholics in that country; and this renunciation besides comes unaccompanied by any competent authority. It is neither authorized by the pope, by a general council, by their bishops or by their clergy. On the contrary, it is very remarkable, that not one of the latter signed the petition; and one cannot therefore help fearing that the same thing may happen in this case that happened in 1793, when the Lords Petre, Stourton, and many other Roman Catholic gentlemen, on applying to Parliament for further indulgence, made the

same

same renunciation of the same obnoxious doctrines that appears in the Irish Petition. The Church of Rome immediately took the alarm, and announced their entire disapprobation of that measure by her Apostolical Vicar in England, who wrote an energetic letter to those gentlemen, condemning what they had done; and that condemnation was sanctioned by the pope, and by all the Catholic bishops in this country and in Scotland.

"But, laying these doctrines out of the question, there is *one* certainly, which the petitioners have not renounced, and indeed cannot renounce, namely, the supremacy of the pope—the acknowledgment of a foreign jurisdiction. It is contended, indeed, that this jurisdiction is only a spiritual one: but the jurisdiction of a foreign Catholic potentate *of any kind whatsoever* must always be a dangerous thing in a

Protestant

Protestant country; and *at this time* it is particularly so, considering the present abject state of the Roman Pontiff, and his absolute vassalage to the Emperor of France. This argument has, I know, been considered of little moment, and treated with little respect: but in my apprehension it is a most important and alarming circumstance. A spiritual authority can never be wholly separated from a temporal one. An unbounded influence over the hearts and consciences of men in spiritual matters, must necessarily be attended with great influence in civil and political concerns: and when we consider, that the Romish clergy of Ireland have an almost absolute command over their flocks; that the clergy are appointed by the bishops; that the bishops are nominated by the pope; and that the pope is now a mere tool in the hands of the

the French Emperor; it is easy to see what power this must give him over the people of Ireland, and in how formidable a manner, at the present perilous and awful crisis, that power may be exerted.

"But, besides this, it appears from the history of this kingdom, that in fact Roman Catholics and Protestants have never yet agreed together in administering the powers of government; and that England never enjoyed peace and security, till the ascendency of one party was established by the downfall of the other. Where the power of the Catholics and Protestants was nearly equal, it was a constant struggle for superiority. The Corporation and Test Acts put a final period to that struggle. Since those Acts passed, the Church of England has enjoyed perfect security and tranquillity. Let us

not,

not, then, part with these bulwarks of our Constitution civil and ecclesiastical, which we must do, if we grant to the Catholics of Ireland (and of course to those of England) all that they demand. Let us preserve with care that admirable Constitution, which our Ancestors have bequeathed to us; namely, *the Established Church* under the protection of the State, with a toleration to all other religious sects and denominations whatever, but at the same time an exclusion of them by proper tests from all places of trust, authority and power. This is the only system, that can give stability and peace to any kingdom, where there are different sorts of religion. It has given stability and peace to this kingdom. It has been found by experience, which is better than a thousand theories, to be the soundest policy. It has left us quiet for above an

hundred

a combination of effort. He entertained the hope, that it might operate as a bond of union between contending parties; and that by bringing them together in one point of vast moment, about which there could hardly be a diversity of opinion, it might gradually allay that bitterness of dispute, and put an end to those unhappy divisions, which have so long tarnished the credit of the Christian world. Whilst therefore he remained firmly attached to the original Society, whose exertions, as far as its limited sphere allowed, no one ever held in higher estimation, he gave at the same time the sanction of his name without scruple to the new one; and the more he considered its object, and the longer experience he had of the spirit and principles on which it was conducted, the more deeply he was convinced, that it merited all the support

which

which the Church of England could give it. "It is now," he observes, in a passage which strongly marks his sentiments, "it is now well known and firmly established, and has completely triumphed over all the attempts made to destroy it. None of those secret dark designs, none of those plots and conspiracies to subvert the Establishment and devour both the shepherds and their flocks, which were so confidently predicted by a certain set of men as the inevitable effect of this Society, have yet been discovered in it. It is, in fact, much better employed. It goes on quietly and steadily in the prosecution of its great object, and pays no sort of regard to the sneers and cavils of its intemperate opponents."—In another passage, written at a still later date, he says,—"that he cannot but add, in justice to this Society, which has been so much

opposed, misrepresented and traduced, that all the important works in which it has been engaged, have been carried on with the utmost harmony and unanimity; without any difference of opinion; without the slightest symptom of any hostile or treacherous design against the Church; and without any other idea upon their minds, but that of extending, as widely as possible, the knowledge of the Christian Scriptures. The Bishops of Durham and Salisbury attended several of their meetings, and were delighted with the decorum, calmness and good temper with which their proceedings were conducted. In short, all the apprehensions, to which this Society has given rise, are now found to be but vain terrors; and all the prophecies of the mischief and evil that would result from it, are falsified by facts. It is rising uniformly in reputation and credit;

credit; gaining new accessions of strength and revenue; and attaching to itself more and more the approbation and support of every real friend to the Church and to Religion."

It does not fall within the plan and scope of these Memoirs to take a part in the controversy now subsisting between the advocates of the two Societies. I cannot however avoid expressing my regret, that such a controversy should ever have taken place: but, as it *has* taken place, it does, I confess, appear to me, that no one argument has yet been advanced against *the Foreign and British Bible Society*, which can at all be considered as proof, that it has any secret views injurious to the interests of the Established Church, or that it has in the slightest degree deviated from the original exclusive purpose, to which, in the face

of the world, it stands most solemnly pledged. The charge hitherto rests upon suspicion and surmise: and there must be some better and stronger evidence, before I can bring myself to condemn an Institution, of which the Bishop, in conjunction with many other excellent and distinguished men, entertained so high an opinion, and the avowed design of which is so strictly in unison with the labours and the spirit of the Christian Ministry.

I have before mentioned the active and zealous part which the Bishop took, in whatever could mitigate the hardships or improve the condition of the Negro Slaves in our West-India Colonies. After all, however, the object to which he had long most anxiously looked, and which alone could completely satisfy him on this

this subject, was the absolute and total abolition of the trade itself; and this, to his infinite gratification and delight, was at last effected in 1807, by considerable majorities in favour of that measure in both Houses of Parliament. His sentiments and feelings on this occasion he has left upon record; and I should do great injustice to his memory, if I neglected the present occasion of laying them before the public.

"The Act," he says, "which has just passed, has at length put a period in this country to the most inhuman and execrable traffic that ever disgraced the Christian world; and it will reflect immortal honour on the British Parliament and the British Nation. For myself, I am inexpressibly thankful to a kind Providence, for permitting me to see this great work, after such a glorious struggle,

brought

substantial, personal liberty to the Continent of Africa!*

"It was said by Mr. Pitt, that the Slave Trade was the greatest practical evil that ever afflicted the human race: and, if this be true, the annihilation of that trade is the greatest practical good that can be conferred on man; and so I firmly believe that it will prove to be. There never was, I am persuaded, from the beginning of the world to this hour, a single instance, in which so great a quantity of evil was ever exterminated from

* How perfectly applicable to this country, with a few slight alterations, is that eloquent eulogy of the Greeks upon the Roman people. The former exclaimed with ecstacy—"Esse aliquam in terris gentem, quæ suâ impensâ, suo labore ac periculo, bella gerit pro libertate aliorum; nec hoc finitimis, aut propinquæ vicinitatis hominibus, aut terris continenti junctis præstet: maria trajiciat, ne quod toto orbe terrarum injustum imperium sit, et ubique Jus, Fas, Lex potentissima sint." Liv. l. xxxiii. c. 33.

from the earth, and so great a quantity of good produced, as by this one act of the British Legislature. It will call down upon us the blessing of millions, not only now in existence, but of millions yet unborn: and, what is still more important, it will draw down upon our arms the blessing of Heaven; and be the means of securing to us the favour of that Being, whose hand outstretched in our defence can alone carry us safely through the dangers that surround us!

"Of the conduct of Mr. Wilberforce in the prosecution of this great cause, I cannot express my admiration in adequate terms. The applause he received was such, as was scarcely ever before given to any man sitting in his place in either House of Parliament: but, had it been even greater than it was, he would have deserved it all, for the unceasing efforts,

efforts, the firm, unshaken, intrepid perseverance, with which he maintained, and finally brought to a successful issue, the most glorious battle, that ever was fought by any human being."

In this just panegyric of the illustrious Champion of the Abolition, all men must unite: but still let it not be forgotten, that the Bishop was one of its earliest promoters and most strenuous advocates. Next to the great and paramount concerns of religion, it was the object of all others nearest to his heart. He never spoke of it but with the utmost animation and enthusiasm. He spared no pains, no fatigue of body or mind, to further its accomplishment. He not only expressed his sentiments, on every occasion that presented itself, publicly and strongly in Parliament; but he was indefatigable in urging all, over whom he

had

had any influence, to conspire and co-operate in what he considered the general cause of civilized man, against a most intolerable system of cruelty and oppression. In short, the best years of his life, and all his talents and powers, were applied and devoted to it; and, I believe, the happiest day, beyond comparison, that he ever experienced, was the day of its final triumph.

But, though he contended with so much zeal and earnestness for the abolition of the Slave Trade, he resisted, in common with many other supporters of that measure, an injudicious though benevolent attempt which was afterwards made to emancipate the Slaves in our West-India Colonies. All that was safely attainable, had been attained; and to have aimed at more would have been imprudent and dangerous. At the same

time

time he thought, that, without proceeding to the length of emancipation, much might be done towards ameliorating the condition of the Slaves, by improving them in civilization; by habituating them gradually to milder treatment; and above all, by impressing deeply upon their minds the precepts and the doctrines of the Gospel. In the attainment of these objects, he had long been actively and anxiously engaged; as the ecclesiastical superintendent of the Colonies, he had at various times and in the most earnest manner pressed the religious instruction of the Negroes on the Governors and Proprietors of the different Islands; and one of the last acts of his life was to address to them a public Letter, written, considering his advanced age, with uncommon spirit and energy, in which he urged the expediency of establishing

parochial

parochial schools on the admirable system of Dr. Bell, for the education particularly of the Children of the Slaves in the principles of Christian knowledge. How far they may be induced to follow up this suggestion, experience will decide. Duty and policy unite in recommending it to their observance; and I am induced at least to hope, that, in conjunction with other powerful motives, the respect, which they cannot but feel for the advice and opinion of the late Bishop of London, on a subject to which he had devoted so much consideration, will finally have its due weight upon their minds.

On the 12th of June 1807, the Bishop had the satisfaction of being present at the consecration of a new Chapel, erected at his own expense, in the parish of

Sundridge. During his residence there in the autumn months, he had been often struck with the situation and circumstances of a small hamlet, called Ide-Hill, about two miles from that village. It stands on the summit of the hilly tract, which rises gradually from the church, and commands one of the finest prospects that can be imagined. The whole vale of Tunbridge lies beneath; and on each side the eye ranges over a most luxuriant landscape, exhibiting the wild profusion of nature heightened by all the charms of a rich and varied cultivation. To this scene, the hamlet itself, consisting of a few cottages erected without order on a little green, forms a highly picturesque and interesting foreground; and it seemed to the Bishop, when he saw it first, completely to realize the idea of rural happiness, innocence, and

peace.

peace. But upon inquiry he soon found, that, even in this sequestered place, amidst so much natural beauty, there was a more than common share of moral deformity; that the poor inhabitants were in a state of the most deplorable ignorance of the great truths of Revelation; and that with habits of sordid and disgusting beggary they were actually "living without God in the world." A combination of circumstances so peculiar dwelt strongly upon his mind; and as much of the evil seemed to originate in the distance of the hamlet from the parish church, and the difficulty of attending divine worship, especially during the winter, he undertook at his own sole cost to erect and to endow a Chapel of Ease, where the duties of religion might be regularly performed, and at the same time to build a house for

for a resident minister. All this, at a very large expense, he lived to accomplish; and thus, by an act of benevolence, of which there are few examples, conferred the greatest of all human benefits. What his own feelings must have been on the day of the consecration, the following extract will best describe.

"On the morning of the 12th," he says, "the principal Gentry of the neighbourhood assembled at my house, to attend the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Chapel. The day was fine. The sun shone gloriously on the extensive vale below, and brought out all the beauties of that enchanting prospect. Great crowds were assembled on the hill, and presented a most cheerful and animated scene. It was, I confess, a most joyful and gratifying day to me; and I thank God

God most devoutly that He inspired me with the resolution to undertake the work, and prolonged my life to see it finished. It will, I trust, under His gracious superintendence, contribute materially to the present comfort and future happiness of some hundreds of poor ignorant people, who, from their remote, and almost inaccessible situation, and their distance from the parish church, were too often destitute of that relief, which their extreme indigence required in this life, and of that religious instruction, which was necessary to their salvation in the next. The clergyman, who will now be fixed among them, and who is bound to reside constantly in the parsonage house, will, it is hoped, by his doctrines, his exhortations, and his example, be the means of remedying these evils, and will, both in their

temporal and their spiritual concerns, be their guide, protector, benefactor and friend."

It is in my power to say, and I say it with genuine satisfaction, that the excellent Minister, who, by the Bishop's own appointment, fills the situation, discharges faithfully and ably all its various duties, and has amply realized his Patron's expectations. Large congregations attend the chapel morning and afternoon; the children of the poor are instructed; and instead of all that idleness, misery and vice, by which the place was formerly distinguished, there is now the appearance of decency and comfort and industry and religion.

The Summer of this year the Bishop spent at Clifton, near Bristol, for the benefit of his health, which was then, and had

had been for some months before, in a very precarious and declining state. During his stay there, he was induced by the peculiar fineness of the season, to make several very pleasant excursions to the various places and scenes most worthy of observation, in that highly beautiful and romantic country; and amongst other interesting visits which he paid, one of the most gratifying was to his friend Mrs. Hannah More, who resided in the neighbourhood, at a place called Barley Wood. Of the talents and virtues of this amiable and excellent Lady, he had not only long entertained, as is well known, the highest opinion, but had taken pains to express it in the strongest terms; and indeed her Writings have been so decidedly and extensively useful; their value has been so highly estimated by the public; her

time and thoughts have been so steadily and laboriously devoted to the cause of religion and the best interests of society; and she has done, particularly, such infinite good by her incomparable schools for the education of the poor, to whose comprehension she has most honourably to herself brought down the ample stores of her own highly cultivated and superior understanding; that it is hardly possible to speak of her in terms of adequate respect, gratitude, and admiration.

The Bishop derived undoubtedly considerable benefit from the clear, salubrious air of Clifton; but still, though in some degree recruited, his constitution was evidently much enfeebled and broken. In the mean time his mind retained its wonted vigour; and on his

return

return to Fulham he resumed with undiminished assiduity all the duties of his high station.

Soon after his arrival, about the end of October, he was surprised by the unexpected visit of a Prussian Clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Usko, who had been for upwards of twenty years Chaplain to the German Factory at Smyrna, and for the last eight to the English Factory in the same place. This gentleman had been introduced to him before, when on a former visit to England; and, both then and on this last occasion, he considered him as a man of high character, and of astonishing attainments in the Eastern and European languages. A passage, written at the time I am now speaking of, very strongly marks his anxious wish to fix Mr. Usko in this country, in a station

tion of all others best adapted to his talents.

"As such a man," he says, "may throw much new light on those treasures of Oriental MSS. which are now shut up in our libraries public and private, and especially in the British Museum, I have strongly recommended him to the Trustees of that national Establishment; and I shall do every thing in my power to place him in a situation, where he may have the best opportunity of displaying his prodigious stores of Oriental learning to his own honour and advantage, as well as to the benefit of the literary world."

Unfortunately no vacancy occurred, so as to enable the Bishop to carry into execution this judicious intention: but as he felt the utmost solicitude to manifest in some way or other his respect for

a clergyman,

a clergyman, from whom he expected such essential benefit to the cause of Christianity; and as, not long after, the valuable living of Orsett, in the county of Essex fell to his disposal, he eagerly seized an opportunity, which might not, and in fact *did not*, again occur, and immediately presented him to that benefice. It has been thought, I well know, that he acted in this instance with too little consideration; but I also know, that he did it in the warmth of his heart, and with the best and purest design of rendering a most important service to the Church of England. I trust it will soon appear, that the hope he so fondly cherished, has not been forgotten. Mr. Usko stands solemnly pledged in honour and in duty to fulfil the engagement which he made with his deceased and venerable Patron. The public look with no small

anxiety

anxiety to some production illustrative of the Christian Scriptures, and worthy of his own superior erudition; and he cannot, I should think, satisfy his own mind, certainly he will not satisfy the expectation which has been excited, unless he give this substantial and unequivocal proof of his gratitude and sincerity.

On the 8th of May 1808, the Bishop entered into his 78th year; and it is remarkable, that on the same day he preached his last sermon in St. George's Church. It was a discourse on the following text from the Revelation of St. John:—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." During the four months that he had

spent

spent at Clifton, he had employed himself in reading the Apocalypse with great attention; and from the impression made upon his own mind, by the grand, comprehensive views of that sublime and interesting Book, he was anxious to stimulate others to acquaint themselves with its contents, which, though undoubtedly of a high mysterious nature, might, he conceived, by a reasonable degree of application, steady perseverance, and the assistance of able and judicious expositors, be very well comprehended, at least in its most material and useful parts, by persons of little learning and moderate understandings.

This, in general, was the object which he had in view; but in the course of the sermon he adverted particularly to that part of St. John's Revelation, which predicts

dicts the rise, continuance, and fall of the Popish and Mahometan corruptions. These, the best commentators agree in opinion, were to commence in the sixth century, and at the expiration of 1260 years, calculated from that period, were finally to cease. There remained, then, as the Bishop justly observed, according to the commonly received interpretation, but a short term of about fifty or sixty years before the prophecy would be fulfilled; when Antichrist would be extirpated from the earth, and the Millennium, or the reign of Christ, would commence. This was accurately, in *substance*, what he delivered in the very interesting discourse to which I allude: but from the low tone of voice in which he had preached it on the Ash Wednesday preceding at the Chapel Royal, some, who heard him indistinctly, understood him

to

to say, that the Day of Judgment would take place in sixty years!

It was in consequence of this strange misapprehension, that he repeated the same sermon at St. George's Church, when, with a strength and firmness of tone, which reached every part of that large congregation, he stated explicitly and distinctly, that *he neither pretended to prophecy nor to interpret prophecy*; but that the sentiments, which he then expressed, were sanctioned by the known, recorded opinion of some of the ablest and most distinguished Divines.

I believe that no sermon ever attracted more attention than this. The veneration universally felt for his exalted character; the general idea, which prevailed, that this was the last occasion of his public preaching; the interest, which his feeble and emaciated form so powerfully excited;

cited; the energy, with which, notwithstanding his infirmities, he delivered many of those sublime passages, which are interspersed through the Revelations; the animated picture, which he drew of the unprecedented and portentous aspect of the times; and the hope, which seemed to fill and elevate his soul, that this Country might possibly be the chosen instrument in the hand of God to diffuse the light of the Gospel throughout the world, and ultimately to accomplish the great schemes of Providence; all these circumstances conspired to render this discourse uncommonly affecting. It was heard with a profound stillness, of which I scarcely ever observed a similar instance; and it made, I trust, a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the congregation.

Not many days after, on the 20th of the

same month, he pronounced in his
al capacity, sentence of deprivation
the Rev. Francis Stone; a clergyman
his diocese, who, at the prosecution
the King's Advocate, under the direc-
of Government, had been clearly
victed, in the Consistory Court of
on, of having preached and after-
s published a most profane and
phemous sermon, in which, with a
rseness and vulgarity of language
ogether unparalleled in modern theo-
gical controversy, he denied the grand,
sential doctrine of our Church, the
Divinity of Jesus Christ. The following
passage, in reference to this subject,
marks in a strong point of view the
Bishop's sentiments, and is highly ho-
nourable to his feelings.

"It was very painful to me," he says,
"to feel myself under the necessity of

 proceeding

proceeding to such extremities. It was the first instance of the kind that had occurred to me, since I sat upon the Bench; and it was totally repugnant to my wishes to punish any man *for mere difference of opinion in matters of religion.* But this was far from being the whole of the offence on the present occasion; for, besides the very obnoxious principles advanced in the Sermon, it reviles, and treats with the utmost indignity, contempt, and ridicule, not only all the Articles of the Church of England, but the essential, fundamental doctrines of the Gospel: and when it is considered further, that the author had himself subscribed to the very doctrines which he so strongly reprobated and inveighed against, and that by means of that subscription he held a Living in the Diocese of London, no one surely can think it right,

right, that such a man under such circumstances, should be permitted any longer to retain a valuable benefice in that very Church which he had in such gross opprobrious terms vilified and insulted."

Notwithstanding the Bishop's increasing debility, which rendered him very unequal to any great exertion, he yet determined to make a last effort in the course of the summer to carry through Parliament a Bill, which he had long had much at heart, for encouraging the residence of Stipendiary Curates. I have already mentioned the disappointment which he experienced in the rejection of this measure upon a former occasion; and, though he was well aware that a strong opposition would again be made to it, yet he would not have satisfied his own mind, if he had abandoned a

question, as it seemed to him, of the very last importance, whilst there remained a hope of success. The objects, which he had in view, were briefly these: in the first place, to provide, that wherever the Incumbent of any benefice did not reside himself, there should be a resident curate;—in the second, where the annual value of the benefice exceeded £. 400. to empower the bishop to assign to the curate one-fifth of that yearly income, by which means his stipend would increase proportionably to the value of the living. A Bill of this description he thought absolutely essential to the welfare of the church, and sanctioned by every principle of justice and expediency; and in these sentiments he had the entire concurrence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Perceval, who had some time before published a

most

most able pamphlet on the subject, and by whose energy and eloquence it was carried triumphantly through the House of Commons. It was not therefore without a sanguine expectation of success, that he introduced the Bill into the House of Lords. At its second reading, though little equal to such an effort, he delivered his sentiments fully and clearly on the whole measure, and gave, as he conceived, satisfactory and conclusive answers to the objections which had been urged against it. But it very soon appeared, that the opposition formerly made had in no respect subsided, and that even on the Bench there was a great difference of opinion. Indeed one right reverend Prelate did not scruple to declare, that in his judgment it was a measure pregnant with mischief; and that it would produce nothing but jealousy and discord

in the Church, through every part of the kingdom. This unambiguous and peremptory language, added to the unfavourable view taken of the subject by the Lord Chancellor, decided the House; and the consequence was, that on the third reading, to the Bishop's infinite mortification and regret, the Bill was rejected.

The following note, subjoined to his Speech on this occasion, which he afterwards printed, is a strong proof of the liberality and candour of his mind, and places in a striking point of view the objects which he proposed to himself, and the motives upon which he acted;—objects and motives, which those, who dissented from him, will at least do him the justice to say, were most honourable to his character.

"It was matter," he observes, "of extreme concern to me, that in the discussion

discussion of this Bill I found myself under the necessity of differing from many noble Lords and learned Prelates (some of them in the highest stations, and of the most distinguished character) for whom I entertain the greatest respect and esteem. But I beg to have it understood, that if any strong expressions escaped me in the warmth of debate, I did not mean to cast the slightest reflection on those who opposed the Bill, and who, I well know, opposed it upon principle, and from a conscientious conviction that it would not answer the end proposed. I give them the fullest credit for the purity of their motives, and the rectitude of their intentions; and all I have to ask in return, is, the same candid interpretation of the part which I have taken, and of the motives by which I have been actuated.

 "I can

"I can with perfect truth declare, that I had not any other objects in view, than those which I openly avowed and professed in the outset of the debate; namely, the general interests of Religion, the credit of the Church of England, the spiritual welfare of the people, and the relief of a large, laborious, deserving, indigent and suffering class of the inferior Clergy: all which important ends I did, and do still most sincerely think, this Bill was well calculated to obtain. I had not, and could not possibly have any other objects in view than these. Indeed no considerations of less moment could have had weight enough to draw me from my retreat, or to set in motion those springs of active exertion, which age and indisposition had so much weakened and impaired; for I can but too closely apply to myself, with a small variation,

variation, those affecting words of old Evander;

> --- Mihi tarda gelu, sæclisque effœta senectus
> Invidet eloquium, seræque ad fortia vires."

The last *public* act, if I may so term it, of the Bishop's life, was worthy of all that he had done before, and I give it in his own words.

"I had for some time past," he says, "observed in several of the papers an account of a meeting, chiefly of military Gentlemen, at an Hotel at the West end of the Town, which was regularly announced, as held *every other Sunday* during the winter season. This appeared to me, and to every friend to religion, a needless and wanton profanation of the Christian Sabbath, which by the laws both of God and man was set apart for very different purposes; and the Bishops and Clergy were severely censured for permitting

and exhausted frame; and it became evident to those most constantly with him, that nature could not much longer sustain the shock. He was himself indeed strongly impressed with the conviction, that his end was fast approaching; and he contemplated the event with all that calm, composed resignation, which nothing can inspire but a deep sense of piety, and a devout, religious submission to the will of God. On Thursday the 10th of May, I saw him for the last time; and never can I forget the affecting solemnity of voice, and look, and manner, in which he begged my most earnest prayers for his early and easy release. He said little more to me, for his mind seemed wholly absorbed in the near prospect of an eternal world. The following day he was at his own desire removed to Fulham; and for a

short

short time the change of air and scene appeared to cheer and exhilarate him. As he sat the next morning in his library, near the window, the brightness of a fine spring day called up a transient glow into his countenance; and he several times exclaimed, O, that glorious Sun! Afterwards, whilst sitting at dinner, he was seized with some slight convulsions, which were happily of short duration; and he then fell, *as it seemed*, into a gentle sleep. From that time however he never spoke, and scarcely could be said to move. Without a pang or a sigh,—by a transition so easy, as only to be known by a pressure of his hand upon the knee of his servant, who was sitting near him,—the spirit of this great and good Man fled from its earthly mansion to the realms of Peace!

How

How truly were his own prayers accomplished, thus beautifully expressed many years before in his Poem upon Death:

"- - - - - - - - At Thy good time
Let Death approach; I reck not:—let him come
In genuine form, not with thy vengeance armed,
Too much for man to bear. O! rather lend
Thy kindly aid to mitigate his stroke.
Then shed thy comforts o'er me; then put on
The gentlest of thy looks; then deign to cheer
My fainting heart with the consoling hope
Of Mercy, Mercy, at thy hands!—And Thou,
Whom soft-eyed Pity once led down from Heaven
To bleed for Man, to teach him how to live,
And, O, still harder lesson! how to die;
Disdain not thou to smooth the restless bed
Of sickness and of pain. Forgive the tear
That feeble Nature drops; calm all her fears;
Fix her firm trust on thy triumphant Cross,
Wake all her hopes, and animate her Faith;
Till my rapt Soul, anticipating Heaven,
Bursts from the thraldom of encumb'ring clay,
And, on the wing of ecstacy upborne,
Springs into Liberty and Light and Life."

In obedience to express directions, which he left in writing, he was removed to Sundridge, and there interred in a vault,

vault, in the church-yard, which he had some time before caused to be erected. The Inscription on the tomb simply records, in compliance with his own wish, the dates of his birth and death; the former, on the 8th of May 1731; the latter, on the 13th of May 1809.

The Executors to the Bishop's Will were his old and much valued friends, the Bishops of Durham and Lincoln, and his nephew, Mr. Thomas Porteus: and, in addition to various kind remembrances to different parts of his family, the following are the principal Bequests:

TO the Rector of St. James's Westminster, to be distributed by him at his discretion amongst the deserving Poor of that parish, within three months after his decease, £. 100.

To the Vicar of Fulham, in Middlesex, to be distributed by him in the same manner, and within the same time, £. 100.

To

To the Rector of Hunton, in Kent, to be distributed by him in the same manner, and within the same time, £.50.

To the Rector of Sundridge, in Kent, to be distributed by him in the same manner, and within the same time, £.50.

To each of his Executors, £.100.

To his dear and pleasant friend Mrs. Kennicott*, £.500. Stock in the 3 per Cents.

To his excellent friend Mrs. Hannah More, of Barley Wood, in the county of Somerset, £.200 Stock, in the 3 per Cents.

He also bequeaths, after Mrs. Porteus's death (to whom he leaves, as it was his anxious

* The regard, which the Bishop entertained for this amiable and excellent Lady, is well known. For many years she paid him an annual visit; and he was always charmed by that power of cheerful, animated, improving conversation, by which she is so much distinguished. He had also the highest opinion of her good sense and judgment and talents; and these qualities, combined, as they eminently are, with the greatest humility, and an unremitted attention to every act of religious duty, public and private, could not fail of rendering her a most welcome and "pleasant" visitor at Fulham.

anxious wish to do, and as indeed by her exemplary piety, her amiable manners, and her affectionate unceasing attention to him, she well deserved *, a most comfortable and liberal provision,) the undermentioned sums to the following public Charities:

TO the Treasurer of a Society in London, called or described by the name of *the Society of Stewards and Subscribers for maintaining and educating poor Orphans of Clergymen, till of age to be put apprentice,* for the general uses of that excellent Society, £. 2,000. Stock, 3 per Cents.:

To the Treasurer of the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, for the benefit of *the Maiden Daughters of*

* How deeply the Bishop himself felt the truth of this observation, may be collected from the following passage, written some years before his death: "To Mrs. Porteus's kind attention and attachment to me, I owe," he says, "much of the comfort and happiness of my life; and it is my earnest wish and intention to make a provision for her after my decease in some degree proportioned to her merits, and to the situation she has held in life."

gentleness, an air of genuine philanthropy about it, with which even indifferent persons were always struck; and yet, when lighted up by the occasion, it displayed the utmost vivacity and animation. His smile had something in it uncommonly captivating; and, though he never lost sight of that dignity, which became his station, it was yet a dignity totally unmixed with pride. He had the enviable talent of dissipating at once that feeling of reserve and apprehension, which, in the presence of a superior, is so often a bar to the freedom and comfort of social intercourse, and by the graciousness of his manner placing those around him perfectly at ease. He delighted in cheerful, lively conversation, and no one ever more promoted it, or perhaps more excelled in it. There was a spirit and playfulness in his language, which

which gave an interest even to the most ordinary topics; and on subjects of graver import, he always appeared to great advantage. His remarks were conspicuous for correct taste, accurate information, and a sound and well regulated judgment; and he expressed himself with so much facility and perspicuity, so much natural energy and eloquence, as never failed to excite attention, and render his society equally instructive and entertaining.

In estimating his intellectual acquirements, I do not think, that profound erudition can be ascribed to him. He had not the inclination, if he had the faculty, to fix and concentrate his thoughts on any one particular science. His imagination was too active and ardent for such exclusive application. Perhaps, if he had followed the natural bent of his genius, Poetry

would have been his favourite pursuit. He saw every thing with a poet's eye; he loved to dwell and expatiate on the wild scenes of nature; his fancy was easily fired, and his affections moved; and he had all that enthusiasm of feeling, which delights in warm and glowing description. As however he had other views in life, he very wisely checked this early impulse, and applied himself to graver studies. In classical literature, he held unquestionably no mean rank; for, without that critical exactness which constitutes the profound scholar, he had read with attention the best writers of antiquity, both Greek and Latin; entered with taste and discernment into their various beauties; and, as his memory was strong and retentive, could recal without difficulty, whatever in them was most worthy of being remembered. In

his

his admirable tract, for instance, on the Beneficial Effects of Christianity, there is an appeal to ancient authorities in confirmation of his argument, which marks an intimate acquaintance with Pagan history, and the books of principal credit, from which any accurate account could be collected of the manners, habits and circumstances of Pagan nations. It is evident from that treatise, that he was completely master of his subject; that he had within his grasp whatever could illustrate and enforce it; and that by a full and ample statement of well authenticated facts he has unanswerably proved his position.

In regard to Theological attainment, there have undoubtedly been, and there are undoubtedly now in the world, men of wider research, more critical precision, and more copious and extensive learning.

But still, generally speaking, he must be considered even in these respects to have ranked high in his profession. His knowledge of Hebrew literature, though he never made any display of it, was by no means inconsiderable. He was well versed in Ecclesiastical history. The evidences of religion, natural and revealed, were in their whole extent familiar to him. He had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the different systems of Theology, which divided the Christian world; and few undoubtedly had ever studied Scripture itself with greater care or more profound attention. He was, in short, in every view of the subject, a sound, well informed, and able divine; and it is, in my judgment, a circumstance highly honourable to his character, that he had read Divinity without imbibing any of that narrow, contracted spirit,

which

which is known sometimes to attach to it. He was indeed on principle, and from a deep persuasion of its superior excellence, unalterably attached to the Church of England. He considered its doctrines, as exhibited in its Homilies, its Articles, and its Liturgy, to be essentially and fundamentally *scriptural*. The Calvinistic interpretation of them he would never admit to be the true one; and in this opinion he was uniform and consistent. He conceived them to speak the language of Scripture, which, in his view of it, was decidedly adverse to the sentiments of Calvin. Upon this point, I wish distictly to be understood, as asserting on my own positive knowledge, that in no one article of faith, as far as they differ from our Church, did he sanction the tenets of that school. On the contrary, I have heard him repeatedly

and

and in the most unqualified terms express his astonishment, that any sober-minded man, sitting down without prejudice to the study of the Sacred Writings, should so explain and understand them*.

He was not less attached to the Church of England in its Discipline, which he thought formed altogether on the Apostolical model; and no one was ever more strenuous in resisting any departure from it on the part of its established Ministers. Amongst other numerous proofs of this fact,

* The world has lately been favoured by an admirable treatise on this subject from the pen of the excellent and learned Prelate, who now presides over the Diocese of Lincoln. It contains a most profound, laborious, conclusive investigation of an intricate and long-agitated question, and must set it, I think, at rest for ever. It is in fact, what it claims to be, "A Refutation of Calvinism;"—a system of religion, as a Writer of great eminence has most justly defined it, "consisting of human creatures without liberty—doctrines without sense—faith without reason—and a God without mercy."

fact, I shall introduce in this place the following letter, which he wrote to a Gentleman, who had applied to him in behalf of Dr. Draper, an episcopally ordained clergyman, whom he had expressly prohibited, on account of some very irregular proceedings, from officiating in any church in his diocese.

"As I understood that Dr. Draper was what you represent him to be, a man of piety and a good preacher, it gave me, I assure you, no small pain to feel myself under the necessity of excluding him from the pulpits of my diocese: but his own conduct rendered it in me an indispensable duty. Instead of confining himself, which as a Minister of the Church of England he ought to have done, to the celebration of divine service in places of worship licenced or consecrated

crated by his Diocesan, and authorized by law, he chose to become the President of a College, and Preacher in a Chapel, founded by Lady Huntingdon, for the purpose of training up lay-preachers for conventicles, licensed as Dissenting Meeting-houses. Lady Huntingdon, though a pious woman, was unquestionably not a member of the Church of England, but what is strictly and properly so called, *a Methodist*; professing the doctrines of one of the first founders of Methodism, George Whitfield, and educating young men to preach those doctrines without episcopal ordination. There could not therefore be a more injudicious and offensive measure, or more hostile to the Church of England, than to become the President of such a College, and the Preacher in such a Chapel, founded for such purposes.

" What

"What Dr. Draper has done, is moreover directly repugnant to the Canons of the Church of England, which prohibit every minister of that church from preaching in any chapel that is not sanctioned and allowed by the ecclesiastical laws of the realm, under very severe penalties; and were I to proceed to extremities, those penalties must be inflicted. But I have taken a milder course. I have only excluded from the parochial churches of my diocese a Clergyman, who has separated himself for a considerable part of the year from the Established Church, and set up a church of his own, neither licensed nor consecrated by his Diocesan. I neither blame Dr. Draper nor any other man for following the dictates of his own conscience in matters of religion. I would have every man permitted to worship God without interruption or molestation in the manner

manner he most approves. But then let him be consistent. Let him not halt between two opinions. Let him not vibrate between two modes of worship. Let him not be a Methodist in the morning, and a Church-of-England man in the afternoon. I never can consent that any clergyman in my diocese should so divide himself between Sectarism and the Establishment—between the Church of England and the church of Lady Huntingdon. Let him take his part, and adhere to it steadily and uniformly throughout.

"In this, I hope, there is nothing like intolerance. It is nothing more than what common decency and common sense require. There cannot be a more determined enemy to persecution of every kind, and a more decided friend to toleration, than myself. Every one that has known

known me and my sentiments and habits, from my earliest youth, knows this to be the case; and, I trust, my writings contain unequivocal proofs of it. Indeed, I believe, I am generally thought to carry my lenity towards those, who have the misfortune to differ from the Church of England, a little too far. I have certainly always treated them with gentleness and courtesy, considering them, as they certainly are, fellow Christians, fellow Protestants, and fellow members of *that Holy Catholic Church, that universal Church of Christ*, which we repeatedly pray for in our admirable and charitable Liturgy.

"Yet, notwithstanding this, whenever the occasion requires it, I will vigorously resist the invasion of unauthorized preachers upon our parish churches. I will not shrink from the duties of my station,

station, but will maintain the discipline and good order of that Ecclesiastical Constitution, of which I am bound to be a vigilant and faithful guardian, and to exercise that authority, with which the laws of the land and the Canons of the Church have invested me for that purpose.

"With respect to the pamphlets you mention, which have been written against me on the case of Dr. Draper, I have read none of them, nor ever shall. I am not to be frightened from doing what I conceive to be my duty, by such contemptible assailants as these. Every man in such a public and ostensible station as mine, must be prepared for attacks of that sort, and must have firmness and fortitude enough to despise them. Otherwise, he is unfit to fill the situation which he occupies."

After

After reading this letter, it will be utterly impossible for any candid man to suppose for a moment, that the Bishop was not a strenuous supporter of the established discipline of the Church of England. But, at the same time, as this letter proves, he had a mind too liberal, too noble and enlarged, not to treat, as he says, "with gentleness and courtesy" those who differed from him in religious opinions. Provided they held the fundamentals of Christianity, he considered them "as fellow Christians, fellow Protestants, and fellow members of the universal church;" and he could never tolerate the thought, that on account of a mere diversity in outward forms, they should be avoided as foes to religion, excluded from the covenant of mercy, and thrust with acrimony and scorn beyond the pale of salvation. Such

language and conduct he held to be at open variance with the text and spirit of Scripture: and he therefore uniformly manifested in his own practice the utmost liberality and candour to every denomination of Christians. He would have been glad to have brought them over to his own way of thinking; but he did not break off all intercourse with them, merely because they chose to think for themselves. On the contrary, he gave them credit for sincerity; he was anxious to shew them any kindness in his power; and, instead of widening the breach by contending about points in which they varied from each other, he laboured with them in promoting those great essential truths, and that unalterable moral Law, in which they all agreed.

I know indeed, and he knew it himself, that he was thought by some to entertain

lax

lax opinions upon this subject, and that he fell under the common, sweeping imputation of Methodism. But he was not to be deterred from pursuing the calm determination of his own mind by any calumny whatever; and much less by the stigma of a name—a name, devised by the enemies of religion for the worst purposes, and which, as generally used, attaches indiscriminately to the ignorant, raving fanatic, and the sound, learned, pious, and even orthodox divine. He was, in fact, neither a Methodist, nor an encourager of Methodism: but he was the advocate of religious liberty,—the friend of moderation and concord. He deprecated, as the greatest injury to Christianity, all violence and animosity; and it was the fervent wish of his heart, that, if men cannot be brought to *think* together, they would at least

endeavour to *live* together in amity and in peace.

In Parliament, the Bishop never spoke, except on points strictly ecclesiastical, connected either with the discipline and good order of the Church, or the general welfare of religion. But when he did deliver his sentiments, he expressed himself with ease, propriety and firmness, and was always heard with attention. His political opinions were those of Mr. Pitt; and he entertained them, not blindly and submissively on a mere party principle, but from a conscientious deliberate conviction, that they were intrinsically right. What his sentiments were of that truly great and ever to be lamented man, will be seen in the following passage:

"The death," he says, "of this illustrious

trious Statesman, has, with very few exceptions, caused inexpressible concern throughout the kingdom. He was unquestionably one of the most extraordinary men that this or any other country ever produced. For near twenty years, he directed the affairs of the British Empire with unbounded confidence from his Sovereign and the people, with unrivalled eloquence and ability, and with unspotted, unimpeached integrity; and we may justly apply to him Mark Antony's splendid encomium upon Cæsar;

He was the foremost man of all the world.

"For a long period he maintained a noble struggle for our liberty and independence, against the gigantic power of France; preserved us, under Providence, from the anarchy and desolation, which

overwhelmed a large portion of the rest of Europe, and died at last a martyr to his unwearied labours in the service of his country.

"It is a singular circumstance," adds the Bishop, "and a most unfortunate one for this kingdom, that two such men as Lord Nelson and Mr. Pitt (each in his respective station without a parallel in the history of the world) should be prematurely taken away from us, within a few months of each other; in the very meridian of their course; at the same period of life; in the full possession of all their faculties and powers; and at a time too, when we stood most in need of the mighty mind of the one, and the invincible arm of the other!—'How unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out!'"

As

As a Preacher, the Bishop's reputation has ever stood deservedly high in the public estimation. Few men indeed were ever so remarkably endowed with all the qualities, which give pre-eminence in the pulpit. His voice, without unusual loudness or strength, was yet uncommonly clear; and it was combined with such a liquid, distinct enunciation, as rendered him completely audible even in the largest churches and to the most crowded congregations. It also possessed great sweetness and flexibility; and he had the talent of modulating it so correctly as always to please and satisfy the ear, and yet so easily and naturally, as never, even in the slightest degree, to incur the charge of affectation. His delivery was very impressive. It was chaste, earnest, spirited, devout. He had no studied action, no vehement and

forced emotion. He spoke evidently as he felt. His whole soul was in his subject. He seemed to forget himself in the deep interest, which he took in the edification of his hearers; and this circumstance gave, as it manifestly would, such a power and charm to his preaching, as never failed to extort attention even from the coldest and the most insensible. His style was admirably adapted to the pulpit. It was plain, without being too familiar; classical, without being pedantic. His great aim was, to express himself so clearly, that the meanest and the least informed might always comprehend him*; and yet with such correctness and purity, as to be heard with satisfaction

* The fact contained in the following extract of a letter to me, from a very sensible and judicious man, is a most striking proof of the clearness and perspicuity of the Bishop's writing, and of its being calculated

satisfaction by men of taste and education. How perfectly he succeeded, his discourses

calculated in an eminent degree for general usefulness:

"- - - - - - Sir Alexander Johnston, who holds, as you know, a high situation in the Island of Ceylon, told me, that, having heard of the discussions which were carrying on in Europe, respecting the introduction of Christianity into the East, it occurred to him, that great mistakes were made from a want of knowledge of the minds of the people, and the most probable means of influencing them; and that with a view to obtain this knowledge he had assembled the leading people in the Island, who were acquainted with the English language, and put into their hands several treatises containing the doctrines and proofs of Religion; requesting that they would read them, and tell him which of them carried most conviction to their minds, and which they thought most likely to make an impression upon the rest of their countrymen. I should tell you, that the persons he consulted were previously nominal Christians, being descendants of those who had embraced the Catholic Religion under the Portuguese, or Calvinism under the Dutch. They all gave a decided preference to the Bishop of London's Epitome of the Christian Evidences; saying, that they had never understood their religion before, and that they were convinced it

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discourses prove. They are distinguished throughout by the most elegant simplicity: at the same time, when the occasion calls for it, they are strong, nervous, eloquent, sublime. His sentiments and language rise with his subject; and, heightened as they were by his peculiar elocution, they made a deep and most powerful impression. But it was neither style, nor manner, nor utterance, which alone gave such efficacy to his preaching. His

was the best adapted to influence the Cingalese. Upon this he ordered it to be translated by the two Interpreters of the Court of Justice, who are men of rank in the Island; and he says it was generally circulated.

"I thought you would be pleased to hear this fact, as an honourable testimony to the merit of the Bishop's work, *proceeding from the criticism of nature*. It strikes me too, that it may be of public use, as a guide to the best mode of instructing the people of the East. At least it shews, that they are open to instruction, conveyed in a sober, rational form, and that the office need not be left, as some think, to wild enthusiasts."

His sermons are conspicuous for sound judgment, solid argument, great knowledge of the human heart, accurate observation of the world, an unshrinking reprobation of vice, the most persuasive exhortations to piety, and an unqualified avowal of all the essential, fundamental truths and doctrines of the Gospel. It has been said indeed, that there are in his discourses no *deep* views of religion; and unquestionably they contain no elaborate discussions on controverted points of theology: no visionary flights of fancy into things *not revealed;* no minute details of religious struggles, impulses, and feelings. But, for the grand object of practical and vital amendment; for all that can seize, excite, and interest the best feelings of the soul; for that energetic appeal to the heart and conscience, which can arrest the sinner in a course of guilt,

guilt, strike him with compunction, urge him to repentance, save him from perdition; for that earnestness of parental counsel, which can fix the wavering and confirm the virtuous; for that power of spiritual consolation, which can soothe the afflicted, bind up the broken-hearted, cheer the suffering, comfort the desponding; for that gentle, meek, conciliating spirit, which can soften the asperity of religious dispute, and unite men of various and discordant sentiments in the bond of peace, amity and affection;—for all these purposes, I know no discourses superior; and there are not wanting instances on record, in which they are known to have been powerfully and signally efficacious. One, in particular, occurred at Bath, where a gentleman at that place, whose name was Boissier, and who had unhappily imbibed

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all the mischievous tenets of the French Philosophy, and was in fact an avowed infidel, was so impressed and struck by a sermon, which the Bishop preached on these words,—"Truly this was the Son of God,"—that he was actually converted by it. He was induced to renounce his former principles. He was persuaded to look into Revelation; to examine and consider its evidences; and the result was, that he not only became a sincere and firm Believer in the doctrines of the Gospel, but undertook a translation of a very ingenious and excellent work, M. Bonnet's *Inquiries into Christianity*, with the hope, as he expresses himself, "of imparting those advantages to others, which I derived myself from the weighty arguments and persuasive eloquence of that respectable Prelate, who first traced out to me the road to Truth."

But

But the Bishop was not only himself pre-eminent in the pulpit, but he was anxious to promote those in the church, who appeared to him to be best qualified by their learning, their talents, and their eloquence, to uphold the cause of religion. It must ever, for example, be mentioned to his honour, that he conferred the valuable living of St. James's, Westminster, on its present highly respected Rector, the Dean of Canterbury. At the time the benefice became vacant, Dr. Andrewes was no otherwise known to him, than by his general character, and his acknowledged excellence as a preacher. But "for these reasons," says the Bishop, "he appeared to me by far the fittest person I could place in that very important situation; the most important perhaps of any parochial situation in this kingdom. His conduct since has

fully

fully answered my most sanguine expectations. His church is crowded with persons of every rank and condition; and he is doing infinite service in that large and populous parish, not only by his preaching, but by his exemplary unremitted attention to all the duties of his profession, private and public."

It was not however only by patronizing men of reputation, and placing them in situations of usefulness and responsibility, that he endeavoured to advance the credit of the church. He was also anxious to lay a foundation for its *future benefit*: and this he thought might be most effectually done in the manner thus stated by himself:

"It has often," he says, "been matter of deep regret to me, that, in the excellent system of education established in

our

our two Universities, sufficient regard has not been paid to the instruction of young men intended for the church, in those studies and attainments, which are peculiarly fitted to qualify them for discharging with respectability and success the various important functions of their sacred office. More particularly I have lamented that there is no part of academical education that has any tendency to produce, what is certainly one of the most useful, and most essential branches of our profession,—good preaching and good reading. There is no instruction given in it, no rewards or honours assigned to it, no attention paid to it. Yet this is confessedly the great instrument by which we are 'to persuade men;' by which we are to make an impression on their hearts and consciences, reclaim them from sin, establish

them

them in virtue, and 'work out their salvation.'

"I therefore determined to *try*, whether by any means I could excite in the younger part of the University of Cambridge a spirit of ambition to excel in those most important and necessary qualifications of a parochial clergyman: and, after much deliberation, nothing seemed to me more likely to attain this purpose, than the institution of Prizes for good Elocution and good Composition on religious subjects. If public honours were once assigned to those, who distinguished themselves in these things, as well as to eminent classical scholars and mathematicians, I felt persuaded, that the most beneficial effects would result from such an institution; and I therefore resolved to form one for that purpose at Christ's College, where

I was educated, if that Society should be inclined to accept it. On my proposing it to Dr. Barker, then Master, he and the College very obligingly acceded to the proposal; and accordingly, very soon after, I transferred the sum of £.1,400. 4 per Cents. for the establishment of three Prizes, to be appropriated to the following purposes:

"1st. A Gold Medal of £.15. value, for the best Dissertation in Latin by an Undergraduate of any standing, on any of the chief evidences, or fundamental doctrines of the Christian Revelation.

"2dly. A Gold Medal of the same value, for the best practical Dissertation in English on any moral precept in the New Testament; regard being had, in deciding on its merits, both to the excellence of the composition, and the graceful and impressive manner of delivering it, when read in Chapel *.

"3dly. A Gold Medal of £.10. value, to the best reader of the Lessons in Chapel."

In

* By a subsequent Indenture, dated Jan. 4th, 1809, the Bishop determined, that the two Prize Medals for Essays

In this manner, did the Bishop, with a truly liberal spirit, prove himself the real friend of the Church, by encouraging, as far as in him lay, a more able and effectual performance of its sacred offices. Indeed I can hardly speak of his generosity, upon *all* occasions, in which it could be exerted, without risking the charge of exaggeration. Yet I know it to be true, and I have before stated the same fact, that no one ever practised the virtue of beneficence in a more exalted degree. Providence had blessed him with ample means, and he employed them freely and largely in removing to the utmost of his power the wants of the necessitous. The tale of distress never came to him unheeded. His heart and his hand were ever open; and many were his

Essays or Dissertations should not be confined to Undergraduates, but should be open to all the Graduates, as well as Undergraduates of Christ's College.

his acts of charity, which were known only to himself and those whom he relieved. In him the poor had a kind, a constant, an unfailing friend; not that he wished to encourage a system of begging, much less that sordid, lazy wretchedness, which sometimes is allied to poverty. On the contrary, he endeavoured to select the virtuous and industrious; and, whilst he never refused to give something to those, who *seemed* to be in need, he always gave more readily and liberally to those, who really wanted, and who, he knew, *deserved* it. His principle was, in short, in all cases, if possible, to discriminate; but not to shrink from an act of charity through a general suspicion of artifice and deception. The very *habit* of giving was in his apprehension more than an equivalent for accidental imposition. To almost

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all our public Charities, he more or less contributed, and often, where it was necessary, to a large amount. Wherever indeed positive good could be done, or positive evil be removed, his aid was never wanting. He was "glad to distribute, willing to communicate."

To those of his Clergy, in particular, whose situation and circumstances required assistance, his kindness was unceasing; and it was always rendered doubly acceptable by the unostentatious manner in which it was bestowed. There are many living at this moment, who can bear ample testimony to the truth of this declaration; and who must often heave a sigh of regret at the loss of so warm a friend, and so generous a benefactor. But, though he himself can now no longer dispense it, his liberality will still be felt in that splendid, and almost unexampled

in still stronger terms we are told, that 'Whoso keepeth God's word, in him verily is the love of God *perfected*.' If, then, you can give this proof of your love; and if moreover you have, as you say, the highest reverence and admiration of his infinite perfections; are deeply impressed with a sense of his goodness; and if, finally, you prefer his favour and approbation to all earthly advantages;—though you may not feel so much ardour of affection as you earnestly wish and strive for, you have yet no reason to apprehend the Divine displeasure for falling short of that measure of excellence, which you sincerely aim at, but feel yourself unable to attain.

"Your next source of uneasiness is the occasional languor and coldness and wanderings of your prayers, especially at church, and the want of that rapturous

delight

delight and joy, which some persons experience in the exercise of devotion. To this I answer, that attention and earnestness, and a certain degree of fervour in our devotion, are doubtless qualifications necessary to render them acceptable to our Heavenly Father; for we are told, that it is only 'the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man that availeth much;' and God reproves those who 'draw near to him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him.' But the *degree* of this fervour, as well as of the joy that springs from devotion, will (like that of the love of God) depend much on the natural temper, disposition, constitution, and other circumstances, and will of course be very different in different men. To wanderings and distraction and occasional languor in their prayers, the best of men are, I fear,

sometimes

sometimes subject; and they must always be resisted to the utmost of our power. There can be no doubt, that, if you strive against them in earnest, you will, by degrees, with God's grace, entirely or in a great measure subdue them, and will also acquire more pleasure in the exercise of devotion. In the meantime, as you say it already affords you satisfaction and comfort, and spreads over your mind a calm complacency and religious composure, you may humbly hope, that your imperfections will be pardoned, and your sincere endeavours accepted at the Throne of Grace.

"The next misfortune you complain of is, that you do not possess that high degree of heavenly-mindedness, that lively conception of the joys of heaven, and that animated and rapturous delight in the contemplation of them, with which

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some persons, and especially Mr. Wilberforce, seem to be blessed. To this I say, that although these delightful feelings are most ardently to be desired, and aimed at, yet if with your utmost endeavours and prayers you cannot attain to them, you must submit with humble resignation to the will of God, and not be dejected or discouraged, or think it any mark of God's displeasure, that he does not vouchsafe them to you. They are undoubtedly the most valuable blessings, that his mercy can bestow upon us; and happy, thrice happy, are they to whom they are given. But, like many other blessings, they fall to the lot of few. Great numbers of sincere Christians feel, that with their utmost efforts they cannot raise their minds to them; and it is then a misfortune in which they must patiently acquiesce. Besides, Infinite Wisdom may see good reasons for not indulging

you

you with these heavenly sensations. The denial of them may be intended as a trial of your patience, your humility, your meekness, your submission; and, if it produce this effect, it will have answered a good end; and, though you may lament the want of these comforts, you have no reason to fear that an *involuntary* want will be imputed to you as a fault.

"With respect to the love of fame, or worldly estimation, there is very little said upon it in Scripture, less perhaps than on any motive of human conduct. But it may be said generally, that this passion, like every other belonging to our frame, when it becomes the predominant and ruling passion, becomes unlawful and sinful: but when kept within proper bounds, and directed to worthy objects, it is then certainly allowable. It is in short to be governed and regulated, not to be exterminated. Mr. Wilberforce himself

himself says, that it is then only a corrupt principle of action, when it is tinctured with a disposition to estimate too highly and to love too ardently the good opinion of man; when it prompts us to pride ourselves on our natural or acquired endowments; to assume to ourselves the merit and credit of our good qualities, instead of ascribing all the honour and glory where they are due. It is only, in short, an inordinate, and a too earnest pursuit of worldly distinction, that is forbidden. We are not called upon absolutely to renounce it; but when it is voluntarily bestowed upon us for actions intrinsically good, we may then accept it with thankfulness, as one of the rewards annexed to virtue. Under these restrictions, therefore, you may have a due regard to the favour and approbation of good men. As to mentioning or preserving the memory of any services you

have rendered to mankind, or to religion; if this be done solely and entirely for the purposes you specify, of obviating calumny, of exciting others to follow your example, and increasing your power of doing good, there seems nothing in it to blame. But if it be merely to gain applause, it is certainly contrary to the true spirit of the Gospel, which forbids all ostentation, both in the distribution of alms, and in the exercise of every other Christian virtue.

"In regard to the last point you touch upon—the liberality of the rich towards the poor—it ought undoubtedly to be proportioned to their wealth; and they should rather exceed than fall short of the strict line of duty. They should give with a willing heart and a liberal hand. 'Charge them,' says the Apostle, 'that are rich in this world, that they do good; that they be rich in good works; ready

to

to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves *a good foundation* against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life.' But it is not said here or any where else, that I can recollect, that the rich are to deny themselves *necessaries*. The young man in the Gospel indeed is commanded, 'if he would be *perfect*, to sell all that he had and give to the poor;' and the first Disciples had 'all things in common.' But no one, I believe, thinks, that we are *now* obliged, or called upon by our duty, or by any principle of Christianity, to do either of these things. Neither, I apprehend, are we now required to part with *necessaries*, in order to relieve the poor. If we do, it is without question highly commendable; but it is no where required as a duty. It is out of their *abundance*, that is, their superfluities, that St. Paul directs the rich Corinthians

to contribute to the support of their poorer brethren; but he does not command them to give their *all*. The poor widow indeed, who threw her mite into the treasury, gave *all* her living; and therefore gave more, and would have a greater reward, than the rich, who gave from their abundance. Still however, what they gave was of *some* value, and was not rejected; and they are not to be discouraged from going even so far. But the further they go, and the greater sacrifices they make for the benefit of the poor, the greater will be their recompense: For 'he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth plenteously shall reap also plenteously.' At all events, they ought most certainly not to consume on their pleasures, their amusements, their vanities and their pride, even the *overflowings* of their fortune. They should not indulge

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in needless splendour, magnificence and elegance of living, nor be anxious to raise great families, or to leave immoderate fortunes behind them. Whatever can be fairly spared from the necessary and unavoidable expenses of their situation in life, and from that reasonable and decent provision, which they are bound to make for their families and dependents after their death, they ought undoubtedly to appropriate to the relief of the poor, the support of religion, and the benefit of mankind. If they go beyond this—if they part even with necessaries to feed the poor—they deserve great praise: they draw nearer to that perfection, which was recommended to the young man in the Gospel, and great will be their treasure in Heaven. But I do not find that this is enjoined in Scripture, any more than selling all we have to give to the poor.

"Upon the whole, I see nothing in

your case, that need give you any serious uneasiness or alarm. Although we should all aim at the very highest point of perfection in the Christian temper and character, yet too many of us, God knows, must expect to fall short of it, some in a greater, some in a less degree; and there must be many grievous errors and defects even in our very best services; yet these we hope will be forgiven, and our imperfect efforts accepted through the merits of our Redeemer. In our Father's house, we are told, are many mansions, and different gradations of happiness. Some will be rewarded with more and some with less, according to the different progress they have made in Christian excellence; but no humble, serious, conscientious Christian, who sincerely wishes and strives, as far as he is able, to devote his heart and life principally to God; who is supremely and habitually governed

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by a desire to know, and a disposition to do his will, and endeavours, under the influence of these motives, to live as much as possible to his glory; who, though he cannot arrive at the perfection he aims at, in his sentiments and feeling, affections and actions, yet uses his utmost efforts to come as near it as he can; and in the meanwhile sees and deplores and labours to correct his failings,—no such pious Christian as this will, I humbly conceive, be excluded from the kingdom of Heaven, and from *some* share, whatever that may be, of future recompense."

In this admirable answer to a perfectly unknown and anonymous correspondent, exclusively of the kindness of the motive, which could alone induce him to write it, there is such a total absence of the wildness of enthusiasm; the advice is so judicious, so truly sound and scriptural; and it offers so much substantial

consolation under the doubts and fears to which a religious mind is sometimes subject, that I could not hesitate in giving it a place in these memoirs. It will, I am persuaded, be read with universal interest, as the advice of a man eminently qualified to give it on subjects of the utmost moment; and I am not without the hope, that it may be the means, with God's blessing, of recalling many from error; of fixing them in right principles; and of rescuing them from a state, of all others the most comfortless and wretched,—a state of uncertainty and apprehension, as to what is really and strictly a Christian's duty.

It will doubtless excite surprise, that amidst the numerous and perpetual employments of so large a diocese, the Bishop should have found leisure for letters such as this; and, more particularly, for entering with such minuteness

of

feelings and situation
whom he had not the
tance. But to those,
well, it is in no respect
his mind, naturally active
required employment; and
made it easy and familiar
was besides a rigid economist
Unless illness prevented him,
stantly at six in the morning,
part of the day had its proper,
d occupation. It was by this
methodical arrangement, from
he never deviated, that he was
d to dispatch his public, official
ess, with the utmost accuracy and
tion, and yet to perform *other* duties
ss imperative, in his judgment, than
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opal station. He could never satisfy
elf with the mere formal discharge
ertain stated functions. In every
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way that good could be done, he spared no pains to do it. He thought his hours well employed, his labour well repaid, if, by any exertion of his own, he could benefit a fellow-creature: if he could assuage the anguish of distress, lighten the pressure of calamity, calm the disquietude of a troubled mind, inspire the timid with hope, or lead the wanderer into the way of truth. For all these acts of love, of sympathy, of kindness, he never wanted time. Whatever else might require his attention, he still found opportunity for these. He considered them, as in fact they are, an important and indispensable part of Christian duty, and admitted no plea of business, no private gratification, no personal fatigue, to be an excuse for the neglect of them.

But it was not only in the grand feature of benevolence, that the Bishop displayed

displayed the power of religion over the heart and conduct. It was in him a governing and a ruling principle. It was the main spring, which constantly and uniformly regulated his thoughts and actions. He had indeed, and who has not, his foibles and infirmities. They were however few, and venial, and almost unavoidable. For instance, amidst the toil and hurry of a laborious station, and from great anxiety in what he was engaged in, he sometimes betrayed, in the latter part of his life, a slight impatience of manner. But he instantly checked it, and no one more lamented it than himself. His disposition indeed, with the exception of such occasional, transient interruptions, arising from the causes I have mentioned, was one of the mildest and the sweetest that can be imagined. It was the index of a heart warmed with all the charities and sympa-

thies

thies of our nature, and under the constant influence of a meek, a benevolent, and a kind religion. In all the offices of devotion, private and public, he was unfailing and exemplary. Firm in his belief of Christianity, every thing connected with it engaged his attention. It was his great end and aim to defend, to cherish, to promote it. The predominant object of all his wishes and desires, was, "in every thing he did, to do it to the glory of God." Yet, amidst a conduct so holy and so pure, he had no melancholy, no austerity, no gloom. In him were never seen the sanctified look, the depressed brow, the sullen spirit, the dismal and desponding countenance. Piety, as he felt and understood it, was best exemplified by cheerfulness. He saw no incompatibility in the innocent pleasures of life with the most unfeigned devotion. He wished to render Religion

as amiable, as she is venerable; to place her before the eyes of men in her most alluring and attracting form—bright, serene, unclouded and benign; in a word, to represent her, not as the enemy and the bane of happiness, but as the guide, the companion, the solace, the delight of man. His own character was framed on this principle. He was cheerful without levity, serious and devout without moroseness. He lived, in short, as he taught others to live; and this it was which, far beyond any other cause, gave such power, such weight, such efficacy to his preaching. "An orator," said the great Roman Philosopher, "if he would persuade, must be a good man;" and still more must the Christian Preacher be himself the Christian. Otherwise, though he should even speak as an Angel of Light, he will speak in vain: his eloquence will be fruitless; and his advice will be forgotten.

Upon

Upon the whole, the Bishop was, and so at least Posterity will consider him, a light in his generation—an ornament to the times in which he lived. Firm and fixed in his own principles; candid and liberal in his sentiments of others; unalterable in his attachments; unbounded in his acts of charity; meek and humble in his disposition; affable and courteous in his manner and deportment; ardent in his piety; devoted to his God;—surely, such a man well maintained the Christian character. That all men indeed should think of him as I do, is hardly to be expected. When the heart overflows with gratitude, such, I trust, as I shall ever feel, for a long course of uninterrupted kindness, friendship and protection, it is perhaps impossible to divest the mind altogether of partiality. I am not however aware, that I have overstated any single fact, or ascribed to

him

him a single quality, which he did not possess. All therefore I can say, is, and they are his own words, as applied to Archbishop Secker, that, " if he really so lived and acted, that the most faithful delineation of his conduct must necessarily have the air of panegyric, the fault is not in the copy, but in the original."

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